THE OCTOBER SPECIAL NUMBER

# THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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Founded A$^o$ D$^i$ 1728 *by* Benj. Franklin

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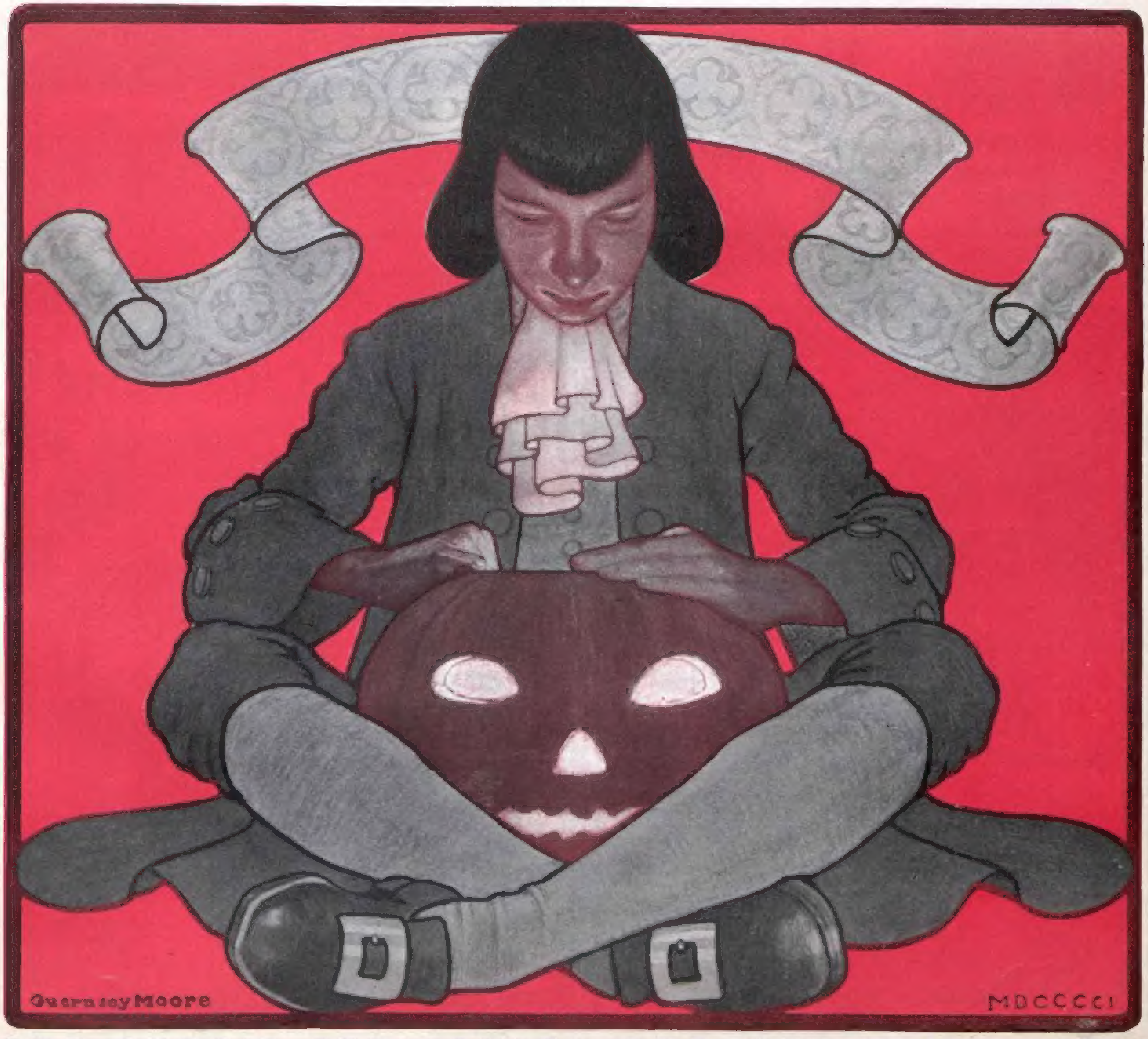

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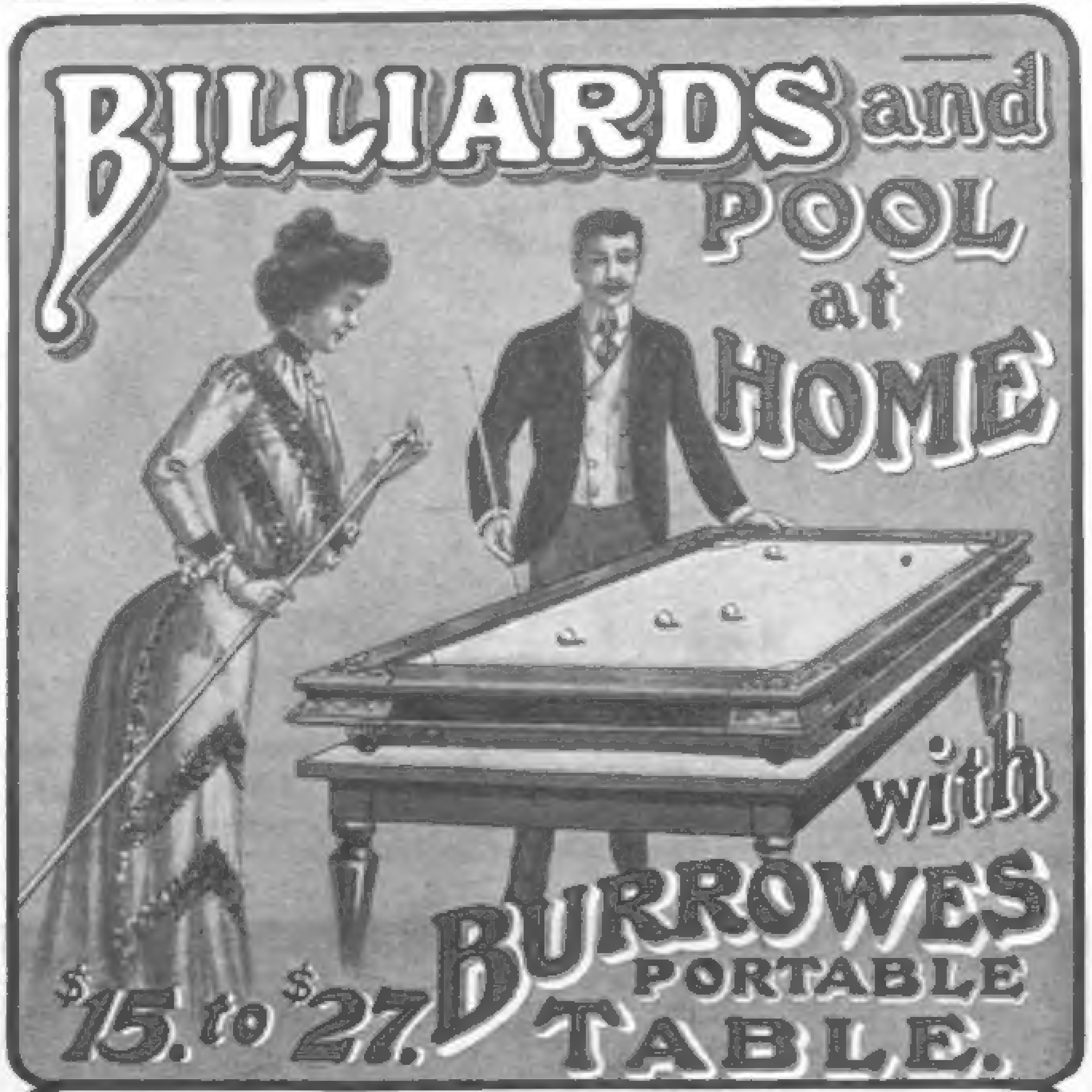
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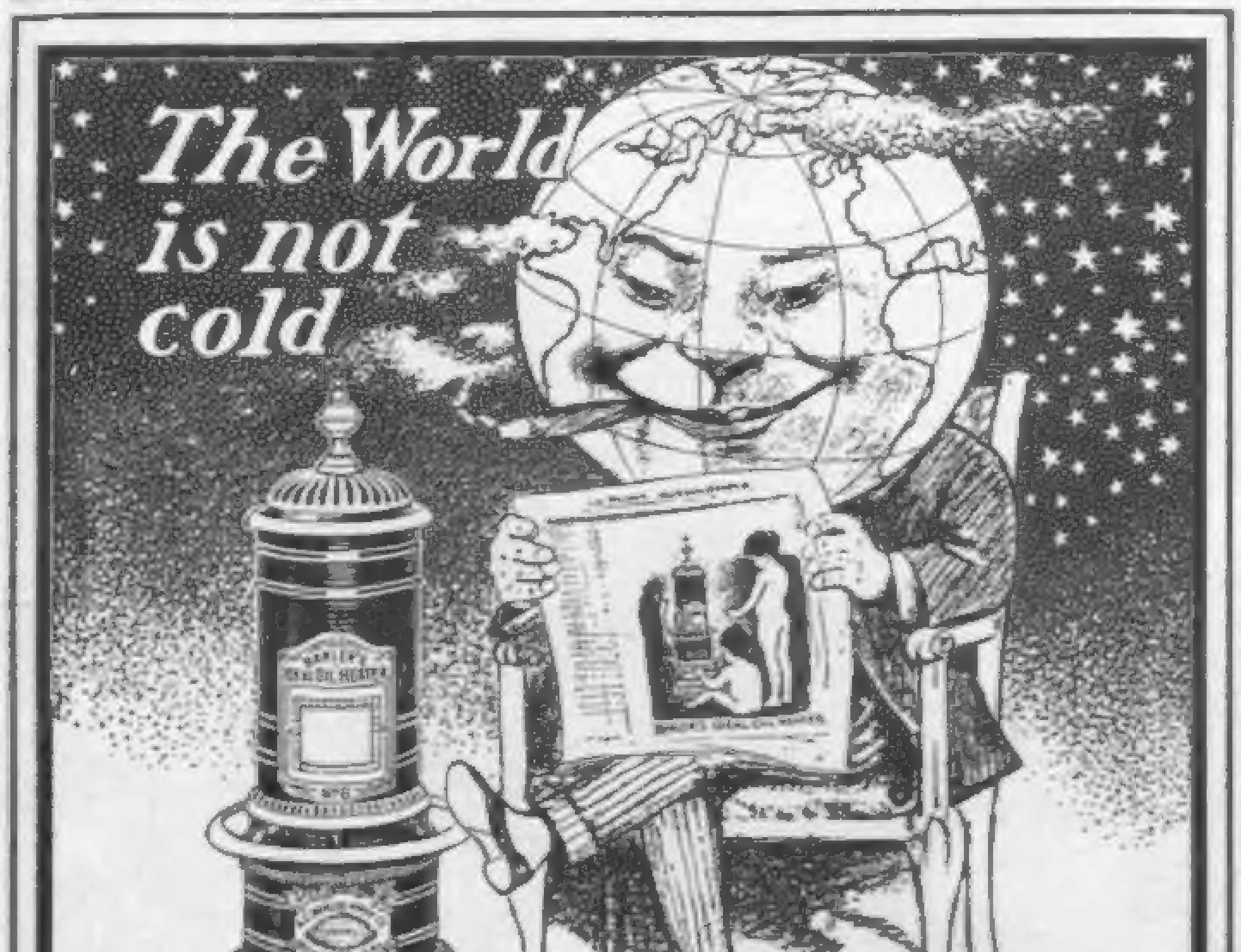
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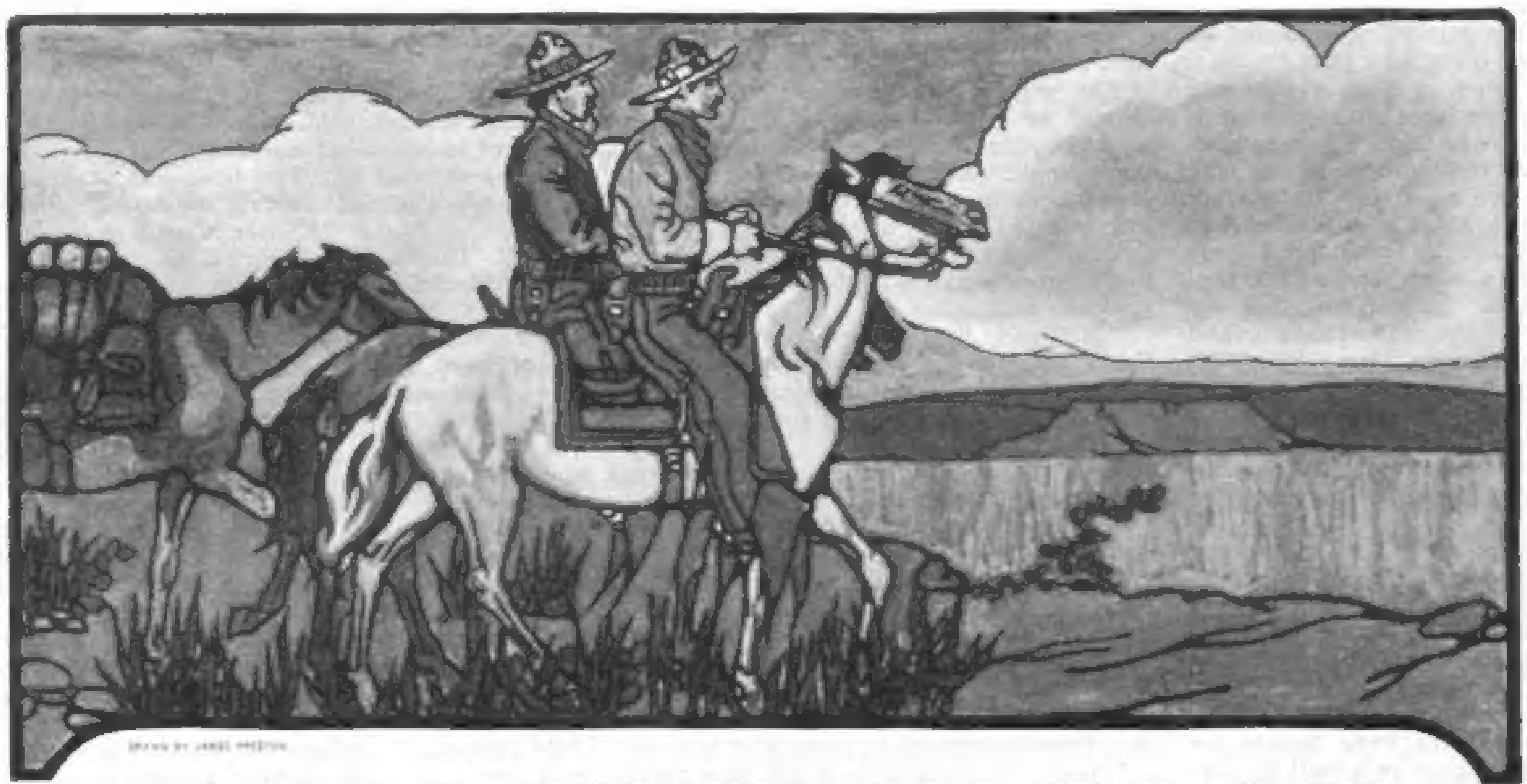


# SUPERSTITION TRAIL

## By Owen Wister

### PART I

WHEN the landmark, the lone clump of cottonwoods, came at last in sight, dark and blurred in the gentle rain, standing out perhaps a mile beyond the distant buildings, my whole weary body hailed the approach of repose. Saving the noon hour, I had been in the saddle since six, and now six was come round again. The ranch, my resting-place for this night, was a ruin — cabin, stable and corral. Yet after the twelve hours of pushing on and on through silence, still to have silence, still to eat and go to sleep in it, perfectly fitted the mood of both my flesh and spirit. At noon, when for a while I had thrown off my long oilskin coat, merely the sight of the newspaper half crowded into my pocket had been a displeasing reminder of the railway, and cities, and affairs. But for its possible help to build fires it would have come no farther with me. The great levels around me lay cooled and freed of dust by the wet weather, and full of sweet airs. Far in front the foothills rose through the rain, indefinite and mystic. I wanted no speech with any one, nor to be near human beings at all. I was steeped in a reverie as of the primal earth; even thoughts themselves had almost ceased motion. To lie down with wild animals, with elk and deer, would have made my waking dream complete; and since such dream could not be, the cattle around the deserted buildings, mere dots as yet across separating space, were my proper companions for this evening.

To-morrow night I should probably be camping with the Virginian in the foothills. At his letter's bidding I had come eastward across Idaho, abandoning my hunting in the Saw Tooth range to make this journey with him back through the Tetons. It was a trail known to him, and not to many other honest men. Horse Thief Pass was the name his letter gave it. Business (he was always brief) would call him over there at this time. Returning, he must attend to certain matters in the Wind River country. There I could leave by stage for the railroad, or go on with him the whole way back to Sunk Creek. He designated for our meeting the forks of a certain little stream in the foothills which to-day's ride had brought in sight. There would be no chance for him to receive an answer from me in the intervening weeks. If by a certain day — which was still four days off — I had not reached the forks, he would understand I had other plans. To me it was like living back in ages gone, this way of meeting my friend, this choice of a stream so far and lonely that its very course upon the maps was wrongly traced. And to leave behind all noise and mechanisms, and set out at ease, slowly, with one pack-horse, into the wilderness, made me feel that the ancient earth was indeed my mother and that I had found her again after being lost among houses, customs and restraints. I should arrive three days early at the forks — three days of margin seeming to me a wise precaution against delays unforeseen. If the Virginian were not there, good; I could fish and be happy: if he were there but not ready to start, good; I could still fish and be happy. And remembering my Eastern helplessness in the year when we had met first, I enjoyed thinking how I had come to be trusted. In those days I had not been allowed to go from the ranch for so much as an afternoon's ride unless tied to him by a string, so to speak; now I was crossing unmapped spaces with no guidance. The man who could do this was scarce any longer a "tenderfoot."

My vision, as I rode, took in serenely the dim foothills — to-morrow's goal — and nearer in the vast wet plain the clump of cottonwoods, and still nearer, my lodging for to-night with the dotted cattle round it. And now my horse neighed. I felt his gait freshen for the journey's end, and leaning to pat his neck I noticed his ears no longer slack and inattentive, but pointing forward to where food and rest awaited both of us. Twice he neighed, impatiently and long; and as he quickened his gait still more, the pack-horse did the same, and I realized that there was about me still a spice of the tenderfoot: those dots were not cattle, they were horses.

My horse had put me in the wrong. He had known his kind from afar, and was hastening to them. The plainsman's eye was not yet mine; and I smiled a little as I rode. When was I going to know, as by instinct, the different look of horses and cattle across some two or three miles of plain?

These miles we finished soon. The buildings changed in their aspect as they grew to my approach, showing their desolation more clearly, and in some way bringing apprehension into my mood. And around them the horses, too, all standing with ears erect, watching me as I came — there was something about them: or was it the silence? For the silence which I had liked until now seemed suddenly to be made too great by the presence of the deserted buildings. And then the door of the stable opened, and men came out and stood, also watching me arrive. By the time I was dismounting more were there. It was senseless to feel as unpleasant as I did, and I strove to give to them a greeting that should sound easy. I told them that I hoped there was room for one more here to-night. Some of them had answered my greeting, but none of them answered this; and as I began to be sure that I recognized several of their strangely imperturbable faces, the Virginian came from the stable; and at that welcome sight my relief spoke out instantly.

"I am here, you see!"

"Yes, I do see." I looked hard at him, for in his voice was the same strangeness that I had felt in everything around me. But he was looking at his companions. "This gentleman is all right," he told them.

"That may be," said one whom I now knew that I had seen before at Sunk Creek; "but he was not due to-night."

"Nor to-morrow," said another.

"Nor yet the day after," a third added.

The Virginian fell into his drawl. "None of you was ever early for anything, I presume."

One retorted, laughing: "Oh, we're not suspicioning you of complicity."

And another: "Not even when we remember how thick you and Steve used to be."

Whatever jokes they meant by this he did not receive as jokes. I was ignorant who Steve might be; but at that name I saw something like a wince pass over his face, and a flush follow it. But he now spoke to me. "We expected to be through before this," he began. "I'm right sorry you have come to-night. I know you'd have preferred to keep away."

"We want him to explain himself," put in one of the others. "If he satisfies us, he's free to go away."

"Free to go away!" I now exclaimed. But at the indulgence in their frontier smile I cooled down. "Gentlemen," I said, "I don't know why my movements interest you so much. It's quite a compliment! May I get under shelter while I explain?"

No request could have been more natural, for the rain had now begun to fall in straight floods. Yet there was a pause before one of them said: "He might as well."

The Virginian chose to say nothing more; but he walked beside me into the stable. Two men sat there together, and a third guarded them. At that sight I knew suddenly what I had stumbled upon; and on the impulse I murmured to the Virginian:

"You're hanging them to-morrow."

He kept his silence.

"You may have three guesses," said a man behind me.

But I did not need them. And in the recoil of my insight the clump of cottonwoods came into my mind, black and grim. No other trees high enough grew within ten miles. This, then, was the business that the Virginian's letter had so curtly mentioned. My eyes went into all corners of the stable, but no other prisoners were here. I half expected to see Trampas, and I half feared to see Shorty; for poor stupid Shorty's honesty had not been proof against frontier temptations, and he had fallen away from the company of his old friends. Often of late I had heard talk at Sunk Creek of breaking up a certain gang of horse and cattle thieves that stole in one Territory and sold in the next, and knew where to hide in the mountains between. And now it had come to the point; forces had been gathered, a long expedition made, and here they were, successful under the Virginian's lead, but a little later than their calculations. And here was I, a little too early, and a witness in consequence. My presence seemed a simple thing to account for; but when I had thus accounted for it, one of them said with good nature:

"So you find us here, and we find you here. Which is the most surprised, I wonder?"

"There's no telling," said I, keeping as amiable as I could; "nor any telling which objects the most."

"Oh, there's no objection here. You're welcome to stay. But not welcome to go, I expect. He ain't welcome to go, is he?"

By the answers that their faces gave him it was plain that I was not. "Not till we are through," said one.

"He needn't to see anything," another added.

"Better sleep late to-morrow morning," a third suggested to me.

I did not wish to stay here. I could have made some sort of camp apart from them before dark; but in the face of their needless caution I was helpless. I made no attempt to inquire what sort of spy they imagined I could be, what sort of rescue I could bring in this lonely country: my too early appearance seemed to be all that they looked at. And again my eyes sought the prisoners. Certainly there were only two. One was chewing tobacco, and talking now and then to his guard as if nothing were the matter. The other sat dull in silence, not moving his eyes; but his face worked, and I noticed how he continually moistened his dry lips. As I looked at these doomed prisoners, whose fate I was invited to sleep through to-morrow morning, the one who was chewing quietly nodded to me.

"You don't remember me," he said; and as I did not he recalled the occasion of our meeting. "You got out of the stage at Signor's. I was tending bar."

Then I recalled the usual midnight change of horses, and how I had taken the usual chance to stretch my legs and to drink some beer. He had sold me the beer on that particular journey. I had shared the quart bottle with him, and we had talked about elk hunting until the stage took me on through the midnight. It came back to me that I had thought him pleasant to talk with. I had never thought of him since; but here was a man I had known a little, gossiped a little with over a friendly glass of beer, and to-morrow — it gave me a new shock, very chill and painful.

He had no such weak feelings. "That's two years ago last July," he added, quite simply.

I assented. I should have liked to say something natural and kind, but words stuck against my will, and I stood awkward and ill at ease, noticing idly that the silent one wore a gray flannel shirt like mine. The chewing one looked me over, and saw in my pocket the newspaper which I had brought from the railroad and on which I had penciled a few expenses. He asked me would I mind letting him have it for a while. And I gave it to him eagerly, begging him to keep it as long as he wanted. I was overeager in my embarrassment. "You need not return it at all," I said; "those notes are nothing. Do keep it."

He gave me a short glance and a smile. "Thank you," he said; "I'll not need it beyond to-morrow morning." And he began to search through it. "Jake's election is considered sure," he said to his companion, who made no response. "Well, Fremont County owes it to Jake."

Dead men I have seen not a few times, even some lying pale and terrible after violent ends, and the edge of this wears off; but I hope I shall never again have to be in the company with men waiting to be killed. By this time to-morrow the gray flannel shirt would be buttoned round a corpse. Until what moment would the other man chew? Against such fancies as these I managed presently to barricade my mind, but I made a plea to be allowed to pass the night elsewhere, and I suggested the adjacent cabin. By their faces I saw that my words merely helped their distrust of me. The cabin leaked too much, they said; I would sleep drier here. One man gave it to me more directly: "If you figured on camping in this stable, what has changed your mind?" How could I tell them that I shrunk from any contact with what they were doing, although I knew that only so could justice be dealt in this country? Their wholesome frontier nerves knew nothing of such refinements.

But the Virginian understood part of it. "I am right sorry for your annoyance," he said. And now I noticed he was under a constraint very different from the ease of the others. I laid it then to the weight of the matter being on him, and perhaps to offense at their declining to let him be sponsor for my good faith. But that was not it; nor did I understand the Virginian's trouble until much later.

After the twelve hours' ride my bones were hungry for rest. I spread my blankets on some straw in a stall by myself and rolled up in them; yet I lay growing broader awake, every inch of weariness stricken from my excited senses. For a while they sat over their councils, whispering cautiously, so that I was made curious to hear them by not being able; was it the names of Trampas and Shorty that were once or twice spoken? I could not be sure. I heard the whisperers cease and separate. I heard their boots as they cast them off upon the ground. And I heard the breathing of slumber begin and grow in the interior silence. To one after one sleep came, but not to me. Outside, the dull fall of the rain beat evenly, and in some angle dripped the spouting pulses of a leak. Sometimes a cold air blew in, bearing with it the keen wet odor of the sage brush. On hundreds of other nights this perfume had been my last waking remembrance; it had seemed to help drowsiness; and now I lay staring, thinking of this. Twice through the hours the thieves shifted their positions with clumsy sounds, exchanging muffled words with their guard. So, often, had I heard other companions move and mutter in the darkness and lie down again. It was the very naturalness and usualness of every fact of the night—the stable straw, the rain outside, my familiar blankets, the cool visits of the wind—and with all this the thought of the man chewing and the man in the gray flannel shirt, that made the hours unearthly and strung me tight with suspense. And at last I heard some one get up and begin to dress. In a little while I saw light suddenly through my closed eyelids, and then darkness shut again abruptly upon them. They had swung in a lantern and found me by mistake. I was the only one they did not wish to rouse. Moving and quiet talking set up around me, and they began to go out of the stable. At the gleams of new daylight which they let in my thoughts went to the clump of cottonwoods, and I lay still with hands and feet growing steadily cold. I wondered how they would do it; one instance had been described to me by a witness, but that was done from a bridge, and there had been but a single victim. This morning, would one have to wait and see the other go through with it first?

The smell of smoke reached me, and next the rattle of tin dishes. Breakfast was something I had forgotten, and one of them was cooking it now in the dry shelter of the stable. He was alone, because the talking and the steps were outside the stable, and I could hear the sounds of horses being driven into the corral and saddled. Then I perceived that the coffee was ready, and almost immediately the cook called them. One came in, shutting the door behind him as he reëntered, which the rest as they followed him imitated; for at each opening of the door I saw the light of day leap into the stable and heard the louder sounds of the rain. Then the sound and the light would again be shut out, until some one at length spoke out bluntly, bidding the door be left open on account of the smoke. What were they hiding from? he asked. The runaways that had escaped? A laugh followed this sally, and the door was left open. Thus I learned that there had been more thieves than the two that were captured. It gave a little more ground for their suspicion about me and my anxiety to pass the night elsewhere. It cost nothing to detain me, and they were taking no chances, however remote.

The fresh air and the light now filled the stable, and I lay listening while their breakfast brought more talk from them. They were more at ease now than was I, who had nothing to do but carry out my rôle of slumber in the stall; they spoke in a friendly, ordinary way, as if this were like every other morning of the week to them. They addressed the prisoners with a sort of fraternal kindness, not bringing them pointedly into the conversation, nor yet pointedly leaving them out. I made out that they must all be sitting round the breakfast together, those who had to die and those who had to kill them. The Virginian I never heard speak. But I heard the voice of my acquaintance of the beer; he discussed with his captors the sundry points of his capture.

"Do you remember a haystack?" he asked. "Away up the south fork of Gros Ventre?"

"That was Thursday afternoon," said one of the captors. "There was a shower."

"Yes. It rained. We had you fooled that time. I was laying on the ledge above to report your movements."

Several of them laughed. "We thought you were over on Spread Creek then."

"I figured you thought so by the trail you took after the stack. Saturday we watched you turn your back on us up Spread Creek. We were snug among the trees the other side of Sneak River. That was another time we had you fooled."

They laughed again at their own expense. I have heard men pick to pieces a hand of whist with more antagonism.

The prisoner continued: "Would we head for Idaho? Would we swing back over the Divide? You didn't know which! And when we generaled you on to that band of horses you thought was the band you were hunting—ah, we were a strong combination!" He broke off with the first touch of bitterness I had felt in his words.

"Nothing is any stronger than its weakest point." It was the Virginian who said this, and it was the first word he had spoken.

"Naturally," said the prisoner. His tone in addressing the Virginian was so different, so curt, that I supposed he took the weakest point to mean himself. But the others now showed me I was wrong in this explanation.

"That's so," one said. "Its weakest point is where a rope or a gang of men is going to break when the strain comes. And you was linked with a poor partner, Steve."

"You're right I was," said the prisoner, back in his easy, casual voice.

"You'd ought to have got yourself separated from him, Steve."

There was a pause. "Yes," said the prisoner moodily. "I'm sitting here because one of us blundered." He cursed the blunderer. "Lighting his fool fire queered the whole deal," he added. As he again heavily cursed the blunderer, the others murmured to each other various "I told you so's."

"You'd never have built that fire, Steve," said one.

"I said that when we spied the smoke," said another. "I said: 'That's none of Steve's work, lighting fires and revealing to us their whereabouts.'"

It struck me that they were plying Steve with compliments.

"Pretty hard to have the fool get away and you get caught," a third suggested.

At this they seemed to wait. I felt something curious in all this last talk.

"Oh, did he get away?" said the prisoner then.

Again they waited; and a new voice spoke huskily:

"I built that fire, boys." It was the prisoner in the gray flannel shirt.

"Too late, Ed," they told him kindly. "You ain't a good liar."

"What makes you laugh, Steve?" said some one.

"Oh, the things I notice."

"Meaning Ed was pretty slow in backing up your play? The joke is really on you, Steve. You'd ought never to have cursed the fire builder if you wanted us to believe he was present. But we'd not have done much to Shorty, even if we had caught him. All he wants is to be scared good and hard, and he'll go back into virtuousness, which is his nature when not traveling with Trampas."

The prisoner's voice sounded hard now. "You have caught Ed and me. That should satisfy you for one gather."

"Well, we think different, Steve. Trampas escaping leaves this thing unfinished."

"So Trampas escaped too, did he?" said the prisoner.

"Yes, Steve, Trampas escaped—this time; and Shorty with him—this time. We know it most as well as if we'd seen them go. And we're glad Shorty is loose, for he'll build another fire or do some other foolishness next time, and that's the time we'll get Trampas."

Their talk drifted to other points, and I lay thinking of the skirmish that had played beneath the surface of their banter. Yes, the joke, as they put it, was on Steve He had lost one point in the game to them. They were playing for names. He, being a chivalrous thief, was playing to hide names. They could only, among several likely confederates, guess Trampas and Shorty. So it had been a slip for him to curse the man who built the fire. At least, they so held it. For, they with subtlety reasoned, one curses the absent. And I agreed with them that Ed did not know how to lie well: he should have at once claimed the disgrace of having spoiled the expedition. If Shorty was the blunderer, then certainly Trampas was the other man; for the two were as inseparable as dog and master. Trampas had enticed Shorty away from good, and trained him in evil. It now struck me that after his single remark the Virginian had been silent throughout their shrewd discussion.

It was the other prisoner that I heard them next address. "You don't eat any breakfast, Ed."

"Brace up, Ed. Look at Steve, how hardy he eats."

But Ed, it seemed, wanted no breakfast. And the tin dishes rattled as they were gathered and taken to be packed.

"Drink this coffee, anyway," another urged. "You'll feel warmer."

These words almost made it seem like my own execution. My whole body turned cold in company with the prisoner's, and as if with a clank the situation tightened throughout my senses.

"I reckon if every one's ready we'll start." It was the Virginian's voice once more, and different from the rest. I heard them rise at his bidding, and I put the blanket over my head. I felt their tread as they walked out, passing my stall. The straw that was half under me and half out in the stable was stirred as by something heavy, dragged or half lifted along over it. "Look out, you're hurting Ed's arm," one said to another, as the steps with tangled sounds passed slowly out. I heard another among those who followed say: "Poor Ed couldn't swallow his coffee." Outside they began getting on their horses; and next their hoofs grew distant, until all was silence round the stable except the dull, even falling of the rain.

I do not know how long I stayed there alone. It was the Virginian who came back, and as he stood at the foot of my blankets his eye, after meeting mine full for a moment, turned aside. I had never seen him look as he did now, not even in Pitchstone Cañon when we came upon the bodies of Hank and his wife. Until this moment we had found no chance of speaking together, except in the presence of others.

"Seems to be raining still," I began after a little.

"Yes. It's a wet spell."

He stared out of the door, smoothing his mustache.

It was again I that spoke. "What time is it?"

He brooded over his watch. "Twelve minutes to seven."

I rose and stood drawing on my clothes.

"The fire's out," said he; and he assembled some new sticks over the ashes. Presently he looked round with a cup.

"Never mind that for me," I said.

"We've a long ride," he suggested.

"I know. I've crackers in my pocket."

My boots being pulled on, I walked to the door and watched the clouds. "They seem as if they might lift," I said. And I took out my watch.

"What time is it?" he asked.

"A quarter of—it's run down."

While I wound it he seemed to be consulting his own.

"Well?" I inquired.

"Ten minutes past seven."

As I was setting my watch he slowly said: "Steve wound his all regular. I had to night-guard him till two." His speech was like that of one in a trance: so, at least, it sounds in my memory to-day.

Again I looked at the weather and the rainy immensity of the plain. The foothills eastward where we were going were a soft yellow. Over the gray-green sage brush moved shapeless places of light—not yet the uncovered sunlight, but spots where the storm was wearing thin; and wandering streams of warmth passed by slowly in the surrounding air. As I watched the clouds and the earth my eyes chanced to fall on the distant clump of cottonwoods. Vapors from the enfeebled storm floated round them, and they were indeed far away; but I came inside and began rolling up my blankets.

"You will not change your mind?" said the Virginian by the fire. "It is thirty-five miles."

I shook my head, feeling a certain shame that he should see how unnerved I was.

He swallowed a hot cupful, and after it sat thinking; and presently he passed his hand across his brow, shutting his eyes. Again he poured out a cup, and emptying this, rose abruptly to his feet as if shaking himself free from something.

"Let's pack and quit here," he said.

Our horses were in the corral and our belongings in the shelter of what had been once the cabin at this forlorn place. He collected them in silence while I saddled my own animal, and in silence we packed the two pack-horses, and threw the diamond hitch, and hauled tight the slack, damp ropes. Soon we had mounted, and as we turned into the trail I gave a look back at my last night's lodging.

The Virginian noticed me. "Good-by forever!" he interpreted.

"By ——, I hope so!"

"Same here," he confessed. And these were our first natural words this morning.

"This will go well," said I, holding my flask out to him; and both of us took some, and felt easier for it and the natural words.

For an hour we had been shirking real talk, holding fast to the weather, or anything, and all the while that silent thing we were keeping off spoke plainly in the air around us and in every syllable that we uttered. But now we were going to get away from it; leave it behind in the stable, and set ourselves free from it by talking it out. Already relief had begun to stir in my spirits.

"You never did this before," I said.

"No. I never had it to do." He was riding beside me, looking down at his saddle-horn.

"I do not think I should ever be able," I pursued.

"I would do it again this morning."

"Oh, I don't mean that. It's all right here. There's no other way."

"I would do it all over again the same this morning. Just the same."

"Why, so should I—if I could do it at all." I still thought he was justifying their justice to me.

He made no answer as he rode along, looking all the while at his saddle. But again he passed his hand over his forehead with that frown and shutting of the eyes.

"I should like to be sure I should behave myself if I were condemned," I said next. For it now came to me—Which should I resemble? Could I read the newspaper, and be interested in county elections, and discuss coming death as if I had lost a game of cards? Or would they have to drag me out? That poor wretch in the gray flannel shirt—— "It was bad in the stable," I said aloud. For an after-shiver of it went through me.

A third time his hand brushed his forehead, and I ventured some sympathy.

"I'm afraid your head aches."

"I don't want to keep seeing Steve," he muttered.

"Steve!" I was astounded. "Why he—why all I saw of him was splendid. I didn't mind him. It was——"

"Oh, yes; Ed. You're thinking about him. I'd forgot him. So you didn't enjoy Ed?"

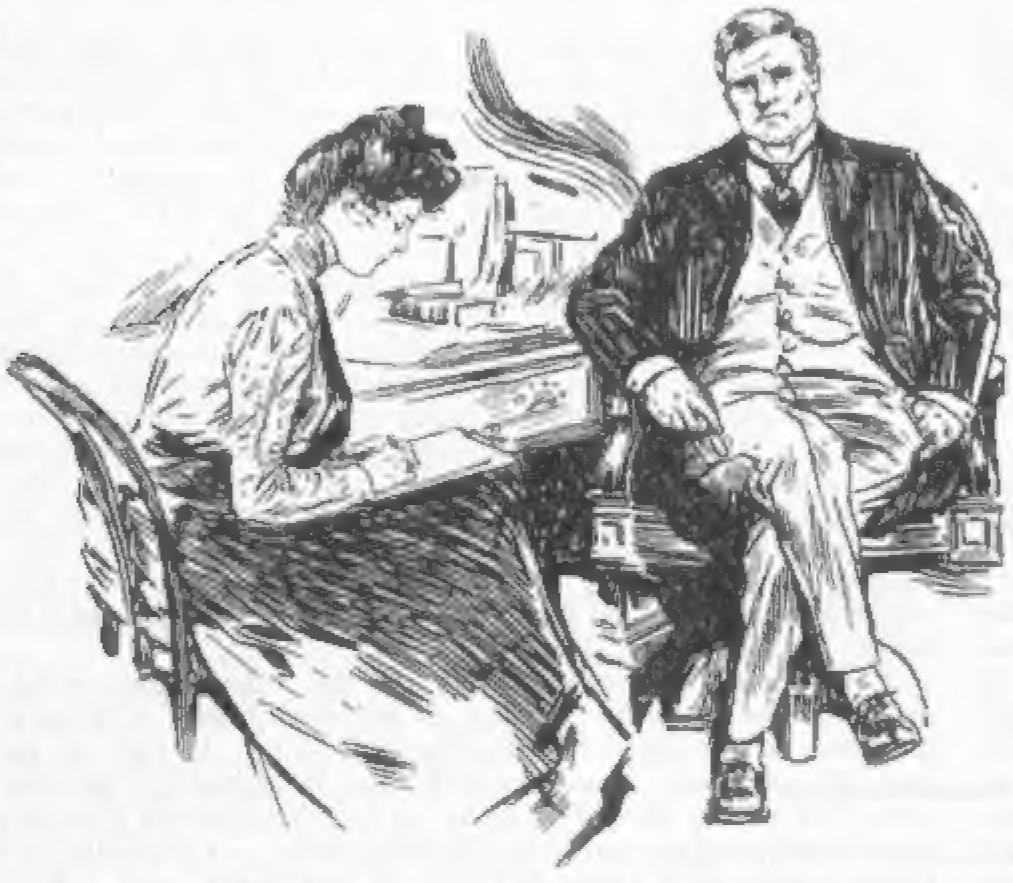
At this I looked at him blankly. "It isn't possible that ——"

Again he cut me short with a laugh almost savage. "You needn't to worry about Steve. He stayed game."

What then had been the matter, that he should keep seeing Steve? that his vision should so obliterate from him what I still shivered at, and so shake him now? For he seemed to be growing more stirred as I grew less. I asked him no further questions, however, and we went on for several minutes, he

# Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to His Son

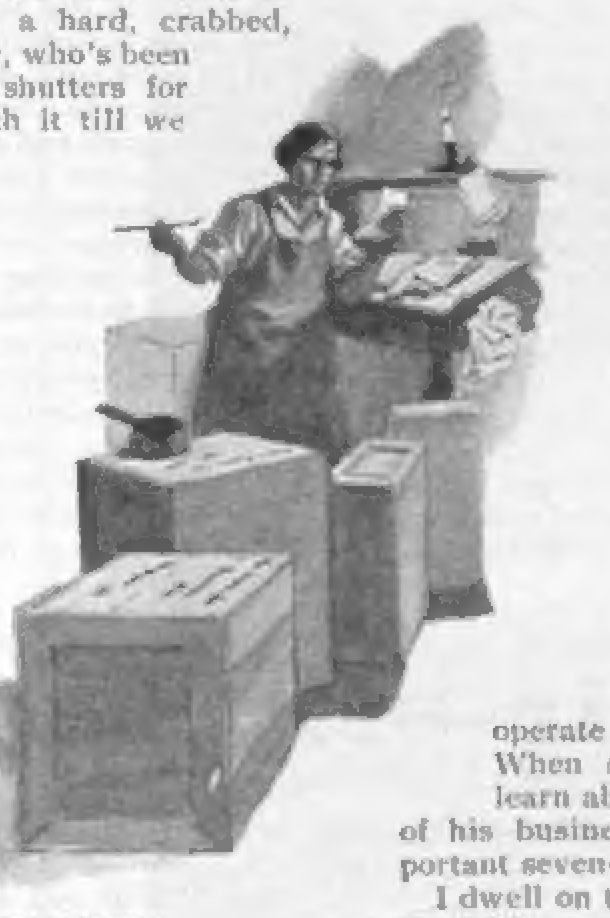
***No. VI — From John Graham, at the Omaha Branch of Graham & Co., to Pierrepont Graham, at the Union Stock Yards, Chicago.***



OMAHA, September 1, 189–.

*Dear Pierrepont:* Yours of the 30th ultimo strikes me all wrong. I don't like to hear you say that you can't work under Milligan or any other man, for it shows a fundamental weakness. And then, too, the house isn't interested in knowing how you like your boss, but in how he likes you.

I understand all about Milligan. He is a cross, cranky old Irishman with a temper tied up in bow-knots, who prods his men with the bull-stick six days a week and schemes to get them salary raises on the seventh, when he ought to be listening to the sermon; who puts the black-snake on a clerk's hide when he sends a letter to Oshkosh that ought to go to Kalamazoo, and begs him off when the old man wants to have him fired for it. Altogether he's a hard, crabbed, generous, soft-hearted, loyal, bully old boy, who's been with the house since we took down the shutters for the first time, and who's going to stay with it till we put them up for the last time.



*When I was clerking in Missouri*

But all that apart, you want to get it firmly fixed in your mind that you're going to have a Milligan over you all your life, and if it isn't a Milligan it will be a Jones or a Smith, and the chances are that you'll find them both harder to get along with than this old fellow. And if it isn't Milligan or Jones or Smith, and you ain't a butcher, but a parson or a doctor, or even the President of the United States, it'll be a Devonian strata deacon, or the undertaker, or the yellow journals. There isn't any such thing as being your own boss in this world unless you're a tramp, and then there's the constable.

Like the old man if you can, but give him no cause to dislike you. Keep your self-respect at any cost, and your upper lip stiff at the same figure. Criticism can properly come only from above, and whenever you discover that your boss is no good you may rest easy that the man who pays his salary shares your secret. Learn to give back a bit from the base-burner, to let the village fathers get their feet on the fender and the sawdust box in range, and you'll find them making a little room for you in turn. Old men have tender feet, and apologies are poor salve for aching corns. Remember that when you're in the right you can afford to keep your temper, and that when you're in the wrong you can't afford to lose it.

When you've got an uncertain cow it's all O. K. to tie a figure eight in her tail if you ain't thirsty, and it's excitement you're after; but if you want peace and her nine quarts, you will naturally approach her from the side, and say, So-boss in about the same tone that you would use if you were asking your best girl to let you hold her hand.

Of course you want to be sure of your natural history facts and learn to distinguish between a cow that's a kicker, but whose intentions are good if she's approached with proper respect, and a hooker, who is vicious on general principles, and any way you come at her. There's never any use fooling with an animal of that sort, brute or human. The only safe place is the other side of the fence or the top of the nearest tree.

When I was clerking in Missouri a fellow named Jeff Hankins moved down from Wisconsin and bought a little clearing just outside the town. Jeff was a good talker but a bad listener, and so we learned a heap about how things were done in Wisconsin, but he didn't pick up much information about the habits of our Missouri fauna. When it came to cows he had had a liberal education and he made out all right, but by and by it got on to ploughing time and Jeff naturally bought a mule — a little moth-eaten cuss with sad, dreamy eyes and droopy, wiggly-woggly ears that swung in a circle as easy as if they ran on ball-bearings. Her owner didn't give her a very good character, but Jeff was too busy telling how much he knew about horses to pay much attention to what anybody was saying about mules. So finally the seller turned her loose in Jeff's lot, told him he wouldn't have any trouble catching her if he approached her right, and hurried off out of range.

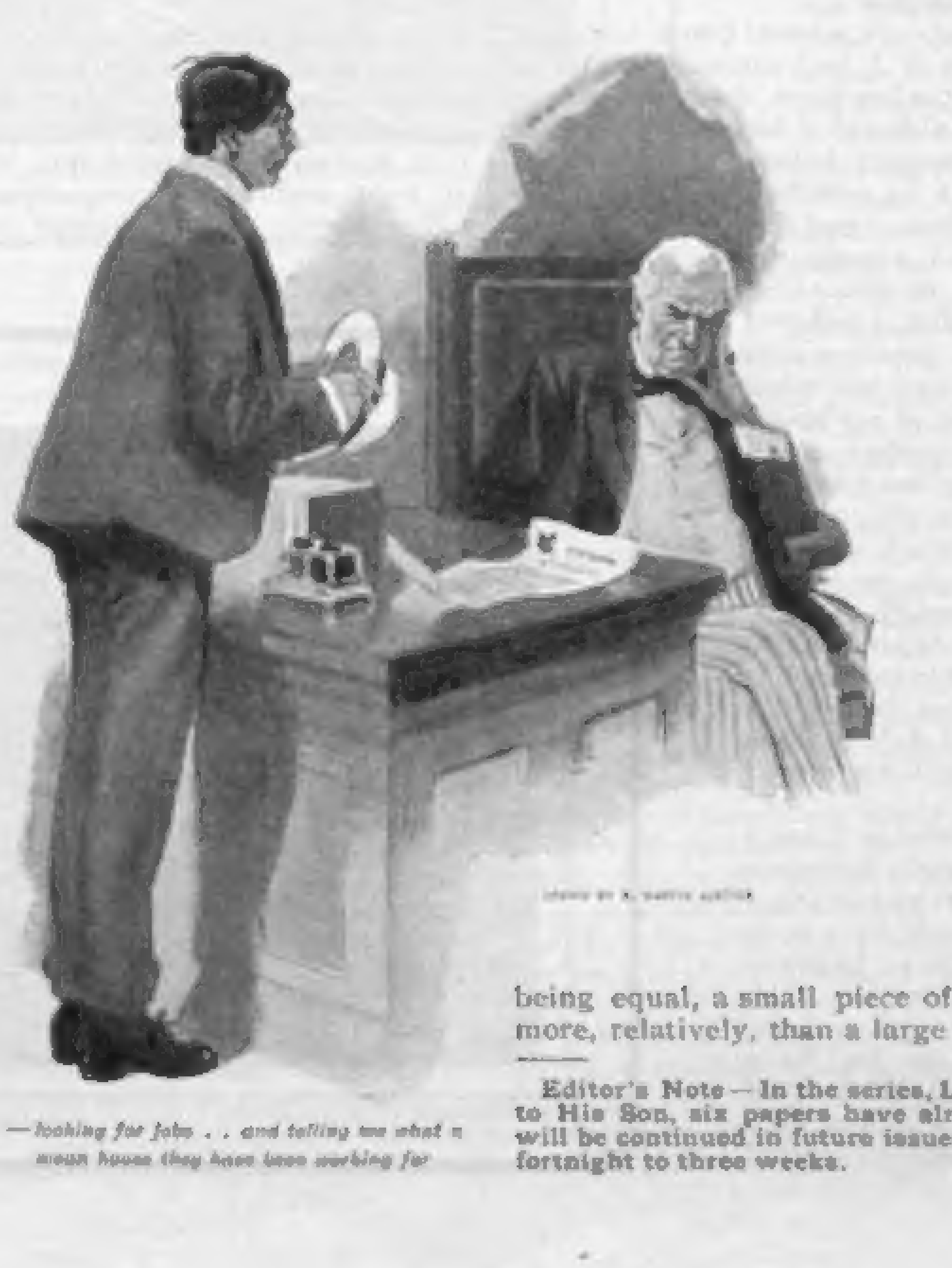
Next morning at sunup Jeff picked out a bridle and started off whistling Buffalo Gals — he was a powerful pretty whistler and could do the Mocking Bird with variations — to catch the mule and begin his plowing. The animal was feeding as peaceful as a water-color picture, and she didn't budge; but when Jeff began to get nearer, her ears dropped back along her neck as if they had lead in them. He knew that symptom and so he closed up kind of cautious, aiming for her at right angles and gurgling, "Muley, muley, here muley; that's a good muley," sort of soothing and caressing-like. Still she didn't stir and Jeff got right up to her and put one arm over her back and began to reach forward with the bridle, when something happened. He never could explain just what it was, but we judged from the marks on his person that the mule had reached forward and kicked the seat of his trousers with one of her prehensile hind feet; and had reached back and caught him on the last button of his waistcoat with one of her limber fore feet; and had twisted around her elastic neck and bit off a mouthful of his hair. When Jeff regained consciousness he reckoned that the only really safe way to approach a mule was to drop on it from a balloon.

I simply mention this little incident as an example of the fact that there are certain animals with which the Lord didn't intend white men to fool. And you will find that, as a rule, the human varieties of them are not the fellows who go for you rough-shod, like Milligan, when you're wrong. It's when you come across one of those gentlemen who have more oil in their composition than any two-legged animal has a right to have, that you should be on the lookout for concealed deadly weapons.

I don't mean that you should distrust a man who is affable and approachable, but you want to learn to distinguish between him and one who is too affable and too approachable. The adverb makes the difference between a good and a bad fellow. The bunco men aren't all at the county fair, and they don't all operate with the little shells and the elusive pea. When a packer has learned all that there is to learn about quadrupeds, he knows only one-eighth of his business; the other seven-eighths, and the important seven-eighths, has to do with the study of bipeds.

I dwell on this because I am a little disappointed that you should have made such a mistake in sizing up Milligan. He isn't the brightest man in the office, but he is loyal to me and to the house, and when you have been in business as long as I have you will be inclined to put a pretty high value on loyalty. It is the one commodity that hasn't any market value, and it's the one that you can't pay too much for. You can trust any number of men with your money, but mighty few with your reputation. Half the men who are with the house on pay day are against it the other six.

A good many young fellows come to me looking for jobs, and start in by telling me what a mean house they have been working for; what a cuss to get along with the senior partner was; and how little show a bright, progressive clerk had with him. I never get very far with a critter of that class, because I know that he wouldn't like me or the house if he came to work for us.



*— looking for jobs . . . and telling me what a mean house they have been working for*

I don't know anything that a young business man ought to keep more entirely to himself than his dislikes, unless it be his likes. It's generally expensive to have either, but it's bankruptcy to tell about them. It's all right to say nothing about the dead but good, but it's better to apply the rule to the living, and especially to the house which is paying your salary.

Just one word before I close, as old Doc Hoover used to say, when he was coming into the stretch, but still a good ways off from the benediction. I have noticed that you are inclined to be a little chesty and starchy around the office. Of course, it's good business, when a fellow hasn't much behind his forehead, to throw out his chest and attract attention to his shirt-front. But as you begin to meet the men who have done something that makes them worth meeting you will find that there are no "keep off the grass" or "beware of the dog" signs around their premises, and that they don't motion to the orchestra to play slow music while they talk.

Superiority makes every man feel its equal. It is courtesy without condescension; affability without familiarity; self-sufficiency without selfishness; simplicity without snide. It weighs sixteen ounces to the pound without the package, and it doesn't need a four-colored label to make it go.

We are coming home from here. I am a little disappointed in the showing that this house has been making. Pound for pound it is not getting nearly so much out of its hogs as we are in Chicago. I don't know just where the leak is, but if they don't do better next month I am coming back here with a shotgun, and there's going to be a pretty heavy mortality among our head men.

Your affectionate father,

JOHN GRAHAM.

## Losses in Cooking Meats

DIETARY investigations made by Government experts show that of the total food consumed by the average man in this country, twenty per cent. is flesh — if that term is taken to include not only meat, but also poultry, fish and shellfish.

Incidentally, a question studied has had to do with the amount of nutritive material lost in the cooking of meat. That there is a loss, of course, is obvious enough, especially where the material is boiled and the water afterward thrown away; but nothing has been known on the subject until recently with any degree of accuracy, and hence the value of the Government investigation, which ought to have no little interest for the American housewife.

Here are some of the conclusions drawn by the experts from their experiments.

The chief loss in weight during the cooking of beef is due to the driving off of water. Lean beef will lose in this way as much as thirty-eight per cent. of its weight.

When beef is fried there appears to be no great loss of nutritive material.

When beef is cooked in water, from three to twenty per cent. of the total solids are found in the broth. If the broth is used for soup or otherwise, it is no loss, obviously.

Beef that has been used for a preparation of beef tea or broth has lost little of its nutritive value, though much of the flavoring has been removed.

Fat meat contains less water proportionately, and so shrinks less in cooking. Other things being equal, a small piece of meat cooked in water shrinks more, relatively, than a large piece.

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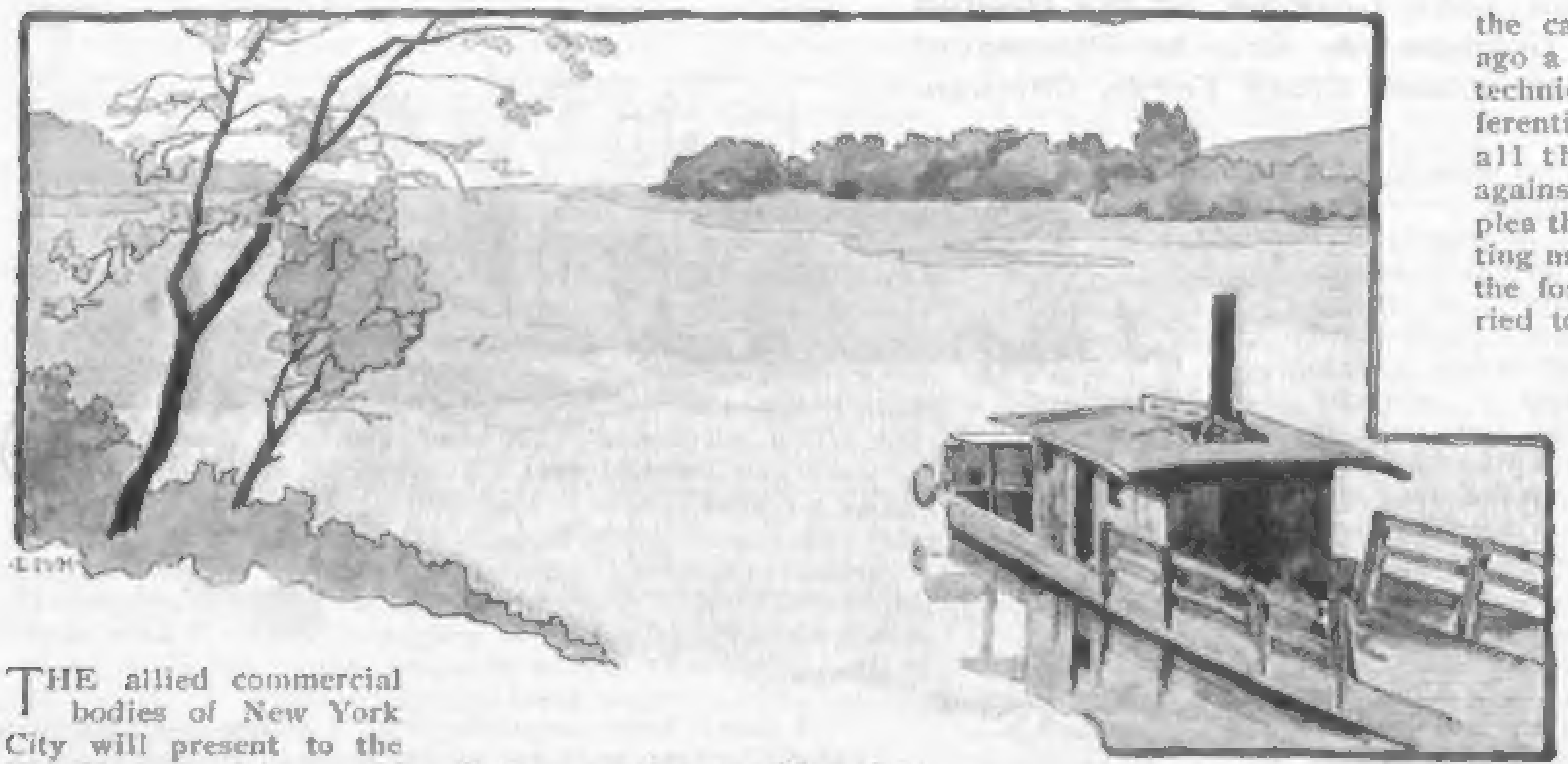
**Editor's Note — In the series, Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to His Son, six papers have already been published. The series will be continued in future issues, appearing at intervals of from a fortnight to three weeks.**

# A Canal Across New York State—By D. LeRoy Dresser

President of the Merchants' Association of New York



THE allied commercial bodies of New York City will present to the New York Legislature this winter a canal proposition that will interest the entire country, particularly the West and Northwest. Though strictly a State enterprise, its benefits, if it be put through, will be felt clear to the Pacific Coast in the Northwest. The proposition involves the expenditure of about $80,000,000 by the State of New York, and provides for the construction of a twelve-foot canal from Buffalo to tide-water in the Hudson River. This canal is to accommodate thousand-ton barges. Comparatively little original work is involved, the plan considered most feasible being the widening and deepening of the Erie Canal.

The concerted movement now on foot is the result of many years' agitation. It is advocated most strongly in New York City because it is at that port that the most direct benefits will be felt.

For years the foreign trade of the country has been growing by leaps and bounds. For reasons directly connected with the inland transportation facilities, New York City has not been receiving its proportionate share of this growth. Though there has been a pronounced increase at this port, the rate has been far below that of other points, such as Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Newport News, New Orleans and Montreal. Figures recently compiled show that the proportion of imports through New York fell from 69 per cent. in 1877 to 63.3 per cent. in 1897, while the imports at all other points in the country increased from 31 per cent. to 36.7 per cent. The exports from New York in 1877 amounted to 43.6 per cent. of all the exports of the country, but in 1897 the exports amounted only to 41.5 per cent. This state of affairs has alarmed the mercantile community of New York, and for years efforts have been made to stem the tide.

The reason for this decline is to be found in the action of the railroads. The remedy is looked for in the completion of the canal project. Years ago a discriminating rate, technically termed a differential, was adopted by all the Eastern roads against New York, on the plea that that city was getting more than its share of the foreign commerce carried to and from the seaboard. As a result of this differential, the freight rate to Boston, though involving a considerably longer haul, was made the same as the rate to New York, and the rate to Philadelphia, Newport News, New Orleans and Montreal was made so much lower than the New York rate that an enormous amount of traffic, which would normally have found its way through this port, was diverted to those points, artificially. The result was that the tonnage entered in New York in 1898 amounted to only 7,771,412 as against 8,009,224 tons entered in the ports of Montreal, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and New Orleans. This is an entire reversal of the order of things as it existed in 1880, when there was no differential against this port. In that year an aggregate tonnage of 7,611,282 was entered in New York as against 5,517,203 entered in the other five ports.

If this rate should be permitted to continue it would not be long before the supremacy of New York in commerce would be seriously menaced. Already enormous damage has been done, as shown by the fact that Montreal's exports increased from $32,345,941 in 1880 to $64,040,982 in 1890, and that the imports have risen from $42,412,648 in 1880 to $65,018,544 in 1899. This advantage to a foreign port has been worked directly by the action of the railroads, because New York at present is unfortunately so situated that there is no competing waterway to her doors from the great productive fields of the North and West.

The old Erie Canal, in its present condition, is practically worthless as a serious means of transportation. The maximum load that can be carried with the present depth of water is about 240 tons. The improvements for which the State of New York spent $9,000,000 a few years ago have added little or nothing to the value of this waterway. Mr. Roosevelt, while Governor of the State, appointed a commission to investigate the question. This commission, of which General Francis V. Greene was the head, reported in favor of the thousand-ton barge canal now advocated by the New York commercial bodies. When Governor Odell was elected he appointed a new commission, which found in favor of a nine-foot canal instead of a twelve-foot. Such a canal would cost about $20,000,000. The Governor favored this measure, and prepared to have it presented to the Legislature last winter. But the objection of the commercial interests of this port prevailed, and the plan was withdrawn, not again, we hope, to be presented. It was the construction and opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 which did more than any other single factor in developing the West and Northwest, and in giving to New York the commercial supremacy of the United States which she now enjoys. The canal at that time was fully up to all the needs of commerce, and it fixed transportation rates from the interior to the seaboard. Since that time, however, the canal has been practically at a standstill, and the railroads have enormously developed and improved in their general management. So much is this the case that the canal no longer offers any sort of competition.

A thousand-ton barge canal, on the other hand, would create a new schedule of rates on certain classes of freight, and this, too, without injuring the railroads. In fact, in the end, the railroads would probably be benefited by the construction of the proposed canal to a greater extent than any other business enterprise in the community A thousand-ton barge could, it is estimated by the engineers, haul certain bulk freights at six-tenths of a mill the ton-mile. The very best the railroads can do is between two and three mills the ton-mile. This means that many classes of freight that cannot be handled at all now would become available for transportation, and thus create new business. So far, therefore, the railroads would not lose anything. At the same time, though, a considerable part of the traffic now controlled by the railroads might be diverted to the canal. This loss, however, would be more than compensated for by the fact that the increased canal traffic and lower rates would build up many new and important industries along the canal route. New communities would spring up and the old communities would grow enormously in population and business. All this would redound to the benefit of the railroads tapping these communities, by creating increased local passenger and freight traffic and new points of distribution. This has been the experience in the past. The New York Central Railroad became great and prosperous because the Erie Canal built up thriving cities along its route. When this phase of the question is thoroughly understood, the railroads, instead of opposing the project, will probably join hands with the mass of the people in putting it through. Their interests and ours are identical in the matter.

Before anything can be done the Legislature will have to pass an act providing for the submission to the people of the proposition whether or not the $80,000,000 necessary shall be spent by the State. On the issue will hang the welfare not alone of New York State, but of every other State in the West and North which depends for its prosperity on getting its surplus products to Europe at the lowest possible rates.

# Patricia's Last Love Affair—By Lilian Quiller-Couch

I AM convinced in my own mind that it is quite the right thing for a woman to be really very angry sometimes. I don't mean the raging, violent sort of anger that makes one untidy and flushed; but a superior, discreet anger, through which one can smile, and talk, and cause no damage to the arrangement of one's back hair.

I myself have been very angry for several hours now, and the relief and satisfaction which I feel are indescribable. Some three hours ago the drawing-room door opened to admit my Cousin George, and, although I had been in a most genial frame of mind one moment before, all the wrath which had been battened down for months blazed up before Jane had finished announcing him—and I smiled upon him.

It was generally understood among my friends and acquaintances and relations (except, perhaps, Aunt Theresa) that I suffered a secret and unceasing pang of hopeless love after my Cousin George changed his mind and delicately refused the honor of my hand; and perhaps the only ray of comfort which slanted my way came from the inner knowledge, which I might hug to myself, that it wasn't true, that I had not a spark of hopeless love in me—that the only strong feeling I had in the matter, and naturally enough, too, was the one which found expression in the words (uttered quite privately to myself): "All right, Cousin George; you just wait a bit." And I can believe that I did not look quite so charming as usual as I murmured them.

Of course, if I had been offered to Cousin George, and Cousin George had, for some incomprehensible—or other—reason, not wished to possess me, that would have been another matter, and I should have been the last to blame him. I am not dull on such points, and I could imagine just such an inappreciation of Cousin George if he had been suggested as a husband for me, by a third person, ten minutes before I accepted him. But the way in which he philandered around and pestered me when he came home from Heidelberg that summer became more than a joke—it became absolutely inconvenient and interrupting.

He proposed to me five times, which I thought a pity each time he did it, for it always seemed rather irrelevant, and the proceeding made me very hot and exhausted. They were all made in the dog-days, Cousin George's proposals, and all within a week, and generally in the sun (Cousin George never had much idea of the fitness of things); and I so soon came to the end of all I had to say that I was at a disadvantage, and quite uncomfortable, sitting there saying nothing—at least, nothing in comparison with what I could say if unhampered. Cousin George could prattle on forever.

I don't know why I did it, but the fifth time Cousin George grew white about the lips and finished up, as usual, by saying: "Will you marry me, Patty?" I said: "Oh, well, I don't mind if I do." And really I didn't mind much, for I had known Cousin George for years and years, and I was quite fond of him, and I felt that, at any rate, it would put an end to his proposals; and Aunt Theresa had said that September was going to be very hot; and, of course, Mr. Featherstone-Hope *did* deserve something, for if he thought that I was going to stand——

Well, anyhow, whether it was right or wrong, or stupid or sensible, I said straight out, "I don't mind if I do," and then, of course, we were engaged. I really did not mind at all, for I knew Cousin George so well, and he knew me; and there was no bother about re-arranging one's ideas and habits, and all that sort of thing, as some girls have to do (so they had told me) just to please the man they are going to marry. I used to look at him sometimes (when he didn't happen to be looking at me), and say to myself: "Well, to think that that's the man I'm going to marry!"—for it really did seem odd; but I wasn't at all upset about it, and after a while I decided that it was really a most comfortable arrangement, and that it was probably all nonsense about that "height of bliss" and "overwhelming happiness" sort of stuff that some persons talk and write about.

I was very matter-of-fact at first, naturally; but when Cousin George chafed at that I did my very best to play up to my part. I never could imagine why persons couldn't go on just as usual, instead of slinking off for *tête-à-têtes* just like silly children telling secrets; but George seemed to like it, and by degrees I got on capitally. I really tried hard to do as other seriously engaged girls did (with Mr. Featherstone-Hope it had all been so different); I don't mean to say that I had to try hard because it was irksome to me. I think I remarked before that I really didn't *mind*.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MISS ZAIDA BEN-YUSUF

*Cousin George sat and breathed hard for a minute or two*

I really didn't *object;* only I was apt to forget sometimes. However, in less than a month I broke myself of tugging away from him and looking bothered and cross when he wanted to kiss me; and when we had had a tiff I was always ready to be friends again. In those days, when we had had a tiff and had grown tired of sparring, George always used to say: "Let us go down the river to the island." And I always went. I think scarcely a day passed without a visit to the island. It wasn't far, and it always meant making up our quarrels again and being more devoted to one another than usual; and George admitted that I never bore malice in my heart.

So the time went on, and George had to go away; and I grew much fonder of him then, and I don't know that I should seriously have cared to change him for any other man I knew—as a fiancé; I say I don't *know* that I should. And I used to write such lovely letters to him. I used to think out sentences in the night—little remarks I knew he'd like to get from me. I really was very attentive to him. I've nothing to reproach myself with on that score. And so things went on.

And then, after a while, when George had been gone some time, his letters changed, and he seemed rather troubled about something. I didn't take much notice of it—I just thought that perhaps the climate didn't suit him; and once I took the trouble to copy out and send to him a recipe which I had heard was good for one if one felt irritable.

But nothing seemed to cheer George, and at length, when I was really beginning to grow troubled about his temper, I had a letter from him to say he thought we had better say "Good-by;" he thought it was his duty to me to say so; he felt that we (*we*, if you please!) had made a mistake; he could never hope to be worthy of me (his modesty was rather new), etc., etc.

I wrote back and said: "Oh, very well; I dare say you know best." But I was really awfully angry; and what made me angrier than anything else was the thought that neither he nor any one else really knew how hard I had found it to play the Juliet part of the arrangement to George's Romeo, and that I hadn't wanted to be engaged at all. Of course they all thought that I was secretly wearing the willow; and the livelier I became as the days passed by and the relief was brought home to me, the more compassionately my relatives looked at me. "She's overacting, poor dear," they were thinking. I am fairly placid as a rule, but my wrath did simmer up at times, and I thought a few strong thoughts about Cousin George.

As I said just now, my wrath blazed out strong as ever when Jane opened the door this afternoon and announced Mr. George Pomeroy, his very self; and I smiled straight into his face, and talked away without a moment's awkwardness, and said how glad I was to see him (which was true). He seemed rather uneasy, and not in very good spirits; perhaps he had no liking for such obvious coals of fire. But I made him sit down, and I talked on blandly, and didn't shirk a thing. I told him about every person and every place we had known and seen together; and I positively dallied over the subject of his long absence, and the summer before his departure. I did it chiefly for my own sake, to prove to him that memories were nothing to me—it was mere justice to myself. But I believe I managed a little revenge at the same time; for I saw him grip his hands now and then, and his lips grew white, just as they used to do when he kept on proposing.

He didn't talk very much, on the whole; he answered my questions with a good many monosyllables, but now and then he would dash into conversation with a strange-sounding voice. And I played off my dimple recklessly, and felt so glad that my frock was extremely becoming.

At length there came a pause; then I feigned another mood, and I made up my mind that I would not break the silence.

Cousin George sat and breathed hard for a minute or two, and then, I suppose, he decided upon breaking down the artificiality of our interview, for he got up from his chair and strode about. I looked out of the window and pretended to be pensive. At last he stopped beside me and said, "Patty."

I looked up at him and laughed. "Cousin George," I said with mock solemnity.

"Don't laugh," he said, drawing back his lip.

"I must," I protested, "when you look so serious."

"I am serious," he declared; "Patty, won't—you—forgive?"

"Forgive?" I repeated, wrinkling my brow and looking puzzled. "Forgive? I have no enemies; people are so good to me, I rarely have anything to forgive."

"Forgive me," he pleaded.

"You!" I cried. "Surely I have nothing to forgive you! Why, you have never done me anything but good turns!"

He turned hastily away, and muttered something which *sounded* wicked. Then he turned to me again. "Patty," he pleaded, "will you row down with me to the island?"

I really was taken aback then, for I gathered that he was in unrelieved earnest, and Cousin George's earnestness is always taken in the solid block; and I believe I was a little touched. But I recollected his last letter to me, and I put on a silly smile. "Oh," I said lightly, "I'm so sorry, but I'm engaged this afternoon." Then I sighed, and added: "I've so many engagements."

"To-morrow then—next day—next week; only promise."

"Oh, you've no idea of my importance," I laughed. "Listen to this;" and, rising, I went to a drawer of my writing-table and took out my little tablets. "Listen," I said again, holding up a finger to him. "Thursday—that's to-day—Tea at the Forestiers' (and it's almost time to start). Friday—Drive to Ellerton Manor. P. P. C."

"P. P. C.!" he repeated. "Are you going away?"

I laughed, half shyly, half significantly. "Yes, I am going away," I admitted. "Saturday—To town, shopping. Sunday—To the Daltons', luncheon and dinner. Monday—Picnic on the island. Oh, by the way, you'd better come to the picnic. I'm sure the Wendovers would like to have you."

"Picnic!" he snapped angrily. "Do you think I want to go with a whole camp-meeting?"

"Oh," I protested blandly, "we sha'n't be that sort at all."

"Tuesday," he pleaded; "come on Tuesday."

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MISS ZAIDA BEN-YÛSUF

Down at the island

"Tuesday," I repeated, referring to my tablets, "Tuesday—To town; final fitting."

"Final fitting?" he queried, rather puzzled.

"My frock, you know," I explained.

"Oh, your frock! Wednesday, then."

"Wednesday," I said softly, "is my own day. I have promised it to myself entirely. I shall not give a moment of it to anybody."

"Thursday——" he began.

"Thursday," I said. "Oh, yes, here it is! Thursday—To be married. Ye-es, I shall be occupied on Thursday."

I looked up at Cousin George. He was very, very white about the lips then.

"To be married?" he repeated in a sort of hoarse whisper.

"Yes," I said nonchalantly. "After that I shall be away."

"You're going to be married?" he panted again.

I laughed rather deprecatingly. "I didn't know it was considered quite so unlikely," I said humbly.

"Who's the fellow?" he demanded bluntly.

"Mr. Featherstone-Hope," I replied tenderly.

"That——!" he began, then he stopped short.

"Yes," I said, "that one."

"Good-by, Patricia," he blurted out, shooting his hand at me as if it were a gun. I really felt as if I were taking hold of a bayonet-point.

"Must you go?" I said sweetly.

"It seems I must"—and his tone was bitter, which seemed rather cool considering how he had treated me.

"I'm so glad you're home," I said pleasantly. "I will send you an invitation." He turned on me then, and glared.

"Don't!" he commanded.

"Oh, yes, I must," I went on cheerfully. "I want to have all my loving relatives about me. Uncle Edward would simply adore you if you would go one better, and relieve him by giving me away."

Then I *know* Cousin George said something wicked. I won't repeat it. Then he strode out and slammed the door.

Poor old George! I've been thinking it over. I don't think I will send him the invitation, after all. He never did *me* any harm.

## The Superlative Girl

### By Charles Battell Loomis

SHE deals in superlatives, but she has the advantage over ordinary dealers in that she can use the same stock over and over again.

We shall suppose her young and pretty because it is so easy to pardon idiosyncrasies in a pretty woman.

It doesn't matter when you meet her, she will begin to unload superlatives immediately.

"Yesterday was positively the very hottest day I ever experienced."

Of course this is supposing that yesterday was a warm day. If it was a cool summer's day she would have said:

"Yesterday was positively the *coolest* day I ever knew in the middle of summer."

And if it was just an ordinary day, not remarkable for either coolness or heat, she would have said:

"Yesterday was really the loveliest day I *ever* experienced; neither too cool nor too hot. And who do you suppose came to see me? Why that perfectly *adorable* and *lovely* Mr. Adams! I think he is positively *quite* the most handsome man who *ever* drew the breath of life. And *funny!* I *never* laughed so hard since I was born. And he told me a true story about Mrs. Smith that was *positively* the most utterly *weird* thing I *ever* heard in my *born* days. I'd tell it, but I never could *half* begin to *commence* to do it as well as he did—not in the *world*. He drove over from Point of Cedars and took me driving, and it was the *loveliest* and most *elegant* drive that could *possibly* be imagined. We took that Five-Mile Road and the views are *simply perfectly abjectly superb!* They are just lovely! Never saw such wonderful scenery in my *whole* existence, and did you see the sunset? Positively the most *gorgeously* indescribable thing that you could ever magine. And Mr. Adams knows so much! I could never *half* begin to commence to learn as much as he knows. He could name the wild-flowers just as easy as I could name the colors in my dress. And he told me some of the most *alarmingly* astounding things about them. I was simply *perfectly* dumfounded to hear that golden rod grows in every *single* State in the whole entire Union. Mr. Adams is a lawyer by profession, and I don't see *where* he can find time to learn so much interesting information about birds and flowers and all sorts of things.

"Dear me! I wish they would ring the dinner-bell. This sitting on a piazza makes me horribly ravenous. I *never* was so hungry in the entire course of my existence. Oh, there's Mr. Sutcliff coming in from the links. Do you play golf? I don't, but my brother does, and I think it must be simply the most *fascinating* game I *ever* heard of except croquet, and I think that that is simply *perfectly adorable!* It's come in again, you know. And basket ball! That is without exception the very best game I *ever* played in my born days. I perfectly *dote* upon it, and it's the despair of my life that I've only had a chance to play one game. But, after all, bowling is the *one* thing that makes life worth living. I think that that is beyond all words the most simply finest game in the universe. Only it's perfectly *fiendish* on the thumbs. But then every game has something that is perfectly dreadful about it. I was never so lame in my *life* as when I played tennis, and *cross* is no word for it when I played croquet. Everybody cheats so ferociously, and they are so provoked if you cheat the *least teenty* bit.

"Oh, there's the bell. Positively I'm so hungry that I feel as if I had been starving forty days and forty nights. But I do hope they won't have mutton. If they do I won't eat a mouthful, for I simply can't bear to eat mutton after seeing the cunning lambs in the fields. I think they are the very *cunningest* creatures that ever hopped——"

As you watch her stride healthily into the dining-room you are reminded of the lady to whom superlatives were unknown, who, on being asked what she thought of the Swiss Alps, replied: "They are quite neat."

# A Dull Fellow—By Ellen MacKubin

I AM a dull fellow, and you are all very kind to take the trouble to explain things," he said when the point of a story had been defined for him, and the smile which accompanied this admission was so good humored that only one of his hearers suspected the pain it concealed.

"You should laugh when the rest of us laugh, Mr. Britton. That is the simple recipe with which many of us concoct a reputation for quick wits," Gertrude Grant declared, looking up at the man sitting on the veranda railing beside her chair—the man who had been born to greater wealth, nearly thirty years since, than most millionaires acquire in twice that period of laborious achievement—the man for whose complete subjugation her grandmother had brought her to this Maine coast paradise, and whose unexpected echo of the verdict usually pronounced upon him awoke a pang of pity in a heart accustomed to consider itself inaccessible to the soft emotions.

"But then I should sometimes miss what you really mean, and I wish to understand my friends," he said in a low tone as a general laugh followed her advice.

"According to their explanation of themselves, instead of your own guessing?" she smiled. "Isn't that very much like throwing away a sword, which is your only weapon, though perhaps not a keen one, and marching through a strange country, trusting its inhabitants neither to rob nor murder you?"

The blue eyes, which regarded her steadily, were distinctly puzzled.

"I was speaking of my friends;" he said slowly. "They would not be my friends if I did not trust them." He paused and added gravely: "Of course, I have been taken in no end of times, and shall be again to the end of my chapter, but, so far, I can blame only my own dullness toward obvious fraud, not any treachery from those in whom I put special confidence."

"What is this about confidence? Or am I indiscreet to ask?" a pleasant voice demanded as a young man appeared beside Nicoll Britton.

Gertrude was aware that she liked the glance Britton turned to the newcomer, though she did not approve its recipient.

"I was saying that my confidence has never been betrayed, except in cases where it was hastily given," he said. "You should endorse me cordially, Otho, as I am usually wise enough to follow your counsels."

Otho laughed. "Miss Grant's eyes assert that she is not wont to consider me a Mentor. How do you consider me, by the way?" he added audaciously.

"As an obstacle between me and the moon at present," she answered serenely. "Mr. Britton's shoulders left me a glimpse of her, but you have obscured her utterly."

Otho laughed again, and came nearer while Nicoll arose.

"There is the first of the waltzes my aunt promised us, and which I must dance with Miss Wynne," the latter exclaimed as three or four people deserted the veranda for the drawing-rooms. "Is there any use in asking you for the next, Miss Grant?"

"Not a bit! I did not come to Maine for waltzes after a winter of cotillons and dancing classes," she declared. "But you will find me in this corner if you return within an hour."

"I will surely return," he asseverated, and her gaze followed his tall, strong figure as he disappeared through a long window.

"I like our host," she said, bringing back her eyes to Otho, who regarded her somewhat cynically.

"He is popular—for reasons," he murmured.

"That is not well spoken by his chiefest friend," she commented coldly. "It suggests curiosity as to the reasons, which are possibly in proportion to the extent of the intimacy."

"We have been chums since we were small boys at school," he said with asperity, "and if his muscles saved me many a licking, my brains did many a task for him."

"You who dislike tasks?"

"I work harder for him than ever I have worked for myself," he protested. "One requires sharp wits in constant practice to steer a gullible millionaire, with an appetite for pictures and curios, among the big dealers in Paris and London—and you may have heard what the art critics in New York said of the collection he has just bestowed upon the Metropolitan Museum?"

She nodded, looking at him with interest.

"I take credit for the value of that collection, as without me Nicoll would have been swindled in the purchase."

"I must tell my grandmother," she laughed. "She has been confident that popular rumor underrates Mr. Britton's shrewdness, since Levi in London assured her, as an old customer by whom he prefers not to be considered an extortioner, that he had received only half the sum for the Raphael which the New York papers announced."

"Levi is a professional liar!" Otho exclaimed angrily. "For once the newspapers told a straight story, and you may so report to Mrs. Grant."

"Suppose you report to her yourself. She says that you are as charming as 'detrimentals' are apt to be!"

"A 'detrimental?'" Otho repeated. "Even your grandmother cannot accuse me of any qualities belonging to that type, except empty pockets—and they are filling!"

"Are they?" she smiled. "Here come pockets which are full but emptying. Dear me! Mr. Britton, there was no need for such hurry when I told you I should stay in this corner an hour!"

At the gates of this particular Maine paradise there is a tidal river which rushes between willow-shaded banks for a course of some eight miles, and divides the devotion to old ocean which is the chief attraction of the place.

Nor indeed can anything more beautiful be conceived than the row up through crimson-tinted waters toward the sunset, unless it be the row down again, with the moonlight casting silver eclipse over the vanished gorgeousness of color.

When this double delight, however, must be won by battle with the tide, either going or coming, an indolent or weary holiday-maker postpones it. But Nicoll Britton was neither indolent nor weary. His great physical strength rejoiced in exertion, and the fact that he thus got a monopoly of Miss Grant's society, during an hour when some instinct taught him that she was more soft of mood than her wont, and he himself at his modest best, rendered blissful to him a canoe expedition together on the following evening.

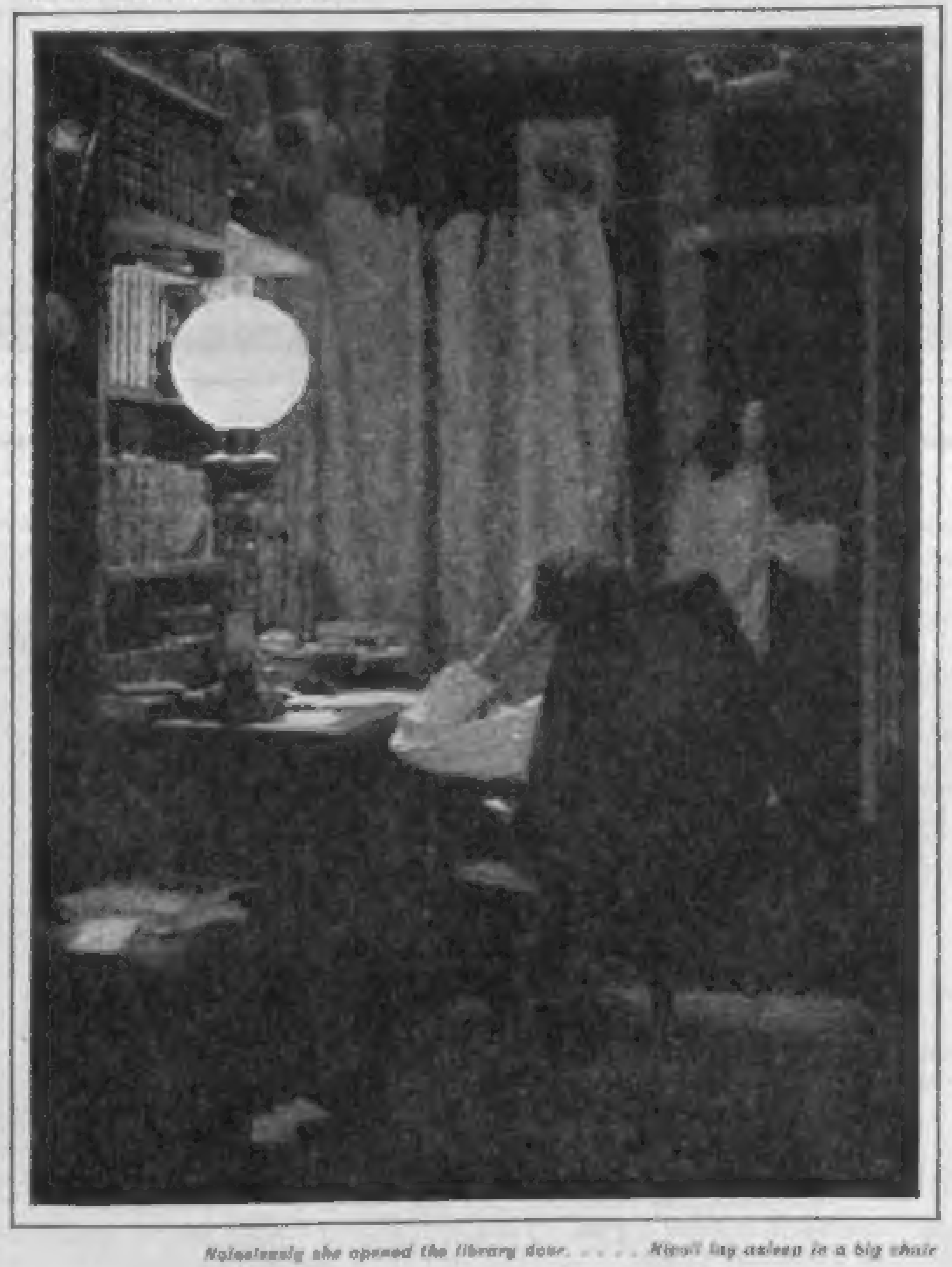
They had floated on the incoming tide beyond the third bridge before she commanded their return, in that dim interval between sunset and moonrise. He obeyed without demur, though the dimness did not hide from her the regret which crossed his face. She divined that obedience without demur, in the fulfillment of any bond to which he had agreed, would be natural to this silent young man, who had pledged obedience to her every whim when they set forth.

"Go slowly, Mr. Britton," she said graciously. "I fancy that, if we should be belated, those arms of yours would easily master the tide."

"We have matched each other often, to my advantage," he laughed. "But there is little need for special strength any longer," he added wistfully, after an instant. "During the Middle Ages a knight or a man-at-arms could acquire, by physical force, the distinction which nowadays, even in the army, is achieved by brains——"

"Yet a name was mentioned in dispatches after San Juan whose owner calls himself a dull fellow," she interrupted.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FREDERIC COLBURN CLARKE



*Noiselessly she opened the library door. . . . . Nicoll lay asleep in a big chair*

"None the less dull because he was fortunate enough to have the chance of helping his wounded captain thrust into his hands!" he exclaimed, while his happy eyes looked their fill on the sweetness of her smile.

"Is it dull, too, to choose pictures, and bestow them, as you do?"

"I like pictures, though the best of them does not mean so much to me as this river to-night," he answered; "but Otho chooses them for me."

"I am going to ask you a most intrusive question—a question on the reply to which I have a wager," she said. "Did you really pay that awful amount of money for the Raphael which the newspapers announced?"

"I really did," he admitted apologetically. "It seems a sum which would be better spent on more practical necessities than a Museum, but Otho was eloquent about the uplifting of the art-sense of our country, and he assures me that I did not pay a penny beyond the Raphael's value."

"He attends to such purchases for you?"

"He is good enough to play 'go-between,' so that I may not be unmercifully robbed."

Gertrude made a sudden movement—almost as though she would touch the brown hands clasped upon his paddle. His start, half incredulous, half eager, was more violent than her movement. Their frail craft swayed, dipped, and, with a storm of splashing, turned over.

Gertrude, who could swim a little and possessed abundant courage, realized at once that she was a mere feather in the mighty tide which bore her whither it would. Then an arm, stronger than the tide, upheld her, and a voice cried close above her head:

"Don't struggle! You shall be on the bank in a moment."

Nobody thinks quite clearly in an instant which may well prove his last, yet, even in the midst of that rushing river, she wondered at the absolute content of her self-surrender to Nicoll's knowledge, as utterly as to his strength.

When they presently scrambled up a gravelly little beach they sat wordless and dripping side by side, during a space when breath seemed a more difficult matter than when the tide water had raced past their lips.

He was on his feet again quickly, however, looking a young giant in the moonlight, with his drenched flannels clinging to him.

"Can you walk or shall I carry you?" he panted. "You must get dry at once, and there is the brick-kiln close by with a fire all night."

"I can run almost as well as you can swim," she began gayly, but, as his fingers clasped hers to help her rise, voice and eyes grew sweet. "The Middle Ages may have possessed nobler uses for the strength you despise than the saving of a girl who has upset your canoe, but you must not expect her to think so!"

A shining fair head was bent suddenly; quivering lips touched her hands. "Any man who could swim would have got you out," he muttered. "Only you could make it worth—all the years of my life to me."

"Don't!" she cried sharply, and withdrew her hands. A slow fellow may stride too rapidly, it appeared, along a road where his guide was not quite certain of the way! "Shall we race?" she added lightly. "The brick-kiln fire is a capital idea, for I am shivering."

Neither had breath to spare on further words as they sped across fields to the curve in the river which the brick-kiln defaces. When they reached it Nicoll brokenly narrated their accident and their needs to a stolid watchman, who, when the disjointed story was concluded, led them to a bench beside the fires and produced a blanket for Gertrude's wrapping, and a coat of curious cut that spoiled Nicoll's picturesqueness. Luckily, too, the kiln possessed a telephone, and Nicoll was able to inform Mrs. Grant of her granddaughter's safety, and to order his beach-wagon sent over for their return. Then, while they waited, a silence fell upon them, which she explained, without contradiction from him, to be due to sleepiness. She smiled as she mentally depicted the different use which most men of her acquaintance would have made of the rôle that kindly fate had bestowed upon him, and for which after the first moment he seemed to have lost inclination. He looked pale, despite the ruddy glow cast on him from the ovens, as he sat with folded arms in his corner of the bench. Perhaps he was sleepy really? She remembered the sound of his voice as his lips touched her fingers, and repeated the jibe, with a rush of feeling she called—pity!

They could not, however, sit there dumbly until the wagon came for them, with the scrutiny of their equally dumb host keeping watch of their manners for future gossip among the natives! Nicoll had done her a good turn: he deserved something in kind from her, and surely, to reveal the surrounding of unsuspected treachery must be a good turn from keen wits to dull? Her dislike of Otho Villars, founded in her perception that he opposed Nicoll's admiration for her, had become distrust of his honor and honesty since her grandmother had repeated Levi's tale, and every new detail of the cousin's positions in that business ripened her distrust.

She moved restlessly.

"Are you chilly?" he asked at once.

"Am I a Salamander?" she laughed. "Let us turn our other cheeks to the fire, as though we were apples roasting on a string, and I will tell you what I was about to say when I upset the canoe."

His eyes adored her mutely despite her disheveled locks and mantle of scarlet blanket! Certainly his way of sitting quite still and speechless, when other men would have fidgeted and babbled, gave him individuality.

"I asked you whether you really paid that enormous sum for the Raphael, because old Levi assured my grandmother that he had received only half the amount."

"He lied," Nicoll answered, smiling. "Otho says that something in the combination of the Jewish instincts with the bric-à-brac trade produces the most brazen liars on record."

"Mr. Villars has a pretty wit," she said impatiently; "but Levi is too clever for easily detected lies, and he told my grandmother without restriction as to repeating his statement."

"Nevertheless, I paid the sum the newspapers mentioned."

"By check?"

He frowned with a puzzled glance.

"By check, of course, but not for the exact amount of the picture's cost, nor made out to Levi," he answered slowly. "It covered several other purchases Otho chose for me in London, and was paid to his account at Brown's there."

"Then Mr. Villars can suppress Levi's story by showing his own canceled check, if you demand it?"

The sudden color in Nicoll's countenance was redder than any reflected glow could bring.

"I am sure you would not suggest that I should ask my cousin for proof of his fair dealing," he said gravely. "He might think that I suspected him of hypothecating many thousand dollars ——"

"I hear wheels!" she interrupted, rising abruptly.

The explanation concerning the check had satisfied her last doubt of Levi's story. Yet she hesitated to go farther, because of a new perception that to destroy his trust in the friend of his past would be crueler to Nicoll than to conceal the treachery, and permit that false friend to swindle his future.

"It is awfully good of you to care whether I have been cheated!" he exclaimed hurriedly. "Otho says I need a special Providence to look after me! But this is not so much a question of Levi's honesty as of ——"

He broke off as Otho, debonair and confident, and followed by Mrs. Grant's maid, appeared in the shed doorway with an armful of wraps.

The newcomer was at the cost of the conversation during the homeward drive, but it was at a cost never difficult for him to defray. Nor was it until Nicoll, reclothed, entered the smoking-room at the cottage, where only himself remained, that he showed any consciousness that he had been delivered of half an hour's monologue, to the accompaniment of two horses' swift hoofs.

"What happened to you and Miss Grant, besides an upset and a swim ashore?" he asked, staring at Nicoll, who was filling a pipe.

"A good deal of talk."

"Obviously. You neither of you had an idea left by the time I——"

"Yet some of the talk concerned you," Nicoll interrupted, turning his eyes from his pipe to his cousin with the look of blended affection and puzzlement with which Otho had been familiar since their round-jacket days. "I'm afraid you and I were cheated about that Raphael!"

"Has Miss Grant been repeating to you Levi's attempt to square his case with that astute old lady, her grandmother?" Otho laughed.

"She had already spoken of it to you?"

"Of course, and to many mutual friends! Her thoughts are too constantly busy with the condition of your exchequer not to find this tale of absorbing interest."

There was no dullness in the flame with which Nicoll's eyes blazed, as only blue eyes can.

"It is my purpose to ask Miss Grant to be my wife," he said very low. "Whatever her answer may be, you must understand that I will not hear her spoken of again as you spoke just now."

"Dear boy!" Otho smiled. "Your announcement has no more surprise for me than Miss Grant's reply will possess."

"You think there is no hope for me? I am not a likable fellow, I know ——"

"You are most likable to me, and to those who find you out, you dumb spirit!" Otho cried warmly. "And Miss Grant's acceptance will be partly for that worth, and partly for another, which no girl, brought up to make a wealthy marriage, can possibly disparage."

Nicoll stretched his strong young arms above his head with a gesture of tragic force.

"D—— money!" he muttered. "I wish I had been born to stone-breaking!"

"Then you would have missed more pleasure than pain—including the acquaintance of Miss Grant!"

Nicoll leaned against the frame of an open window, and gazed out at the moonlit ocean.

"We have got a long way from Levi and his lies," Otho said presently, while his arm went about the other's broad shoulders. "Shall I silence them by producing my canceled check? It must be among my last winter's belongings in town."

"I have not deserved this question from you," Nicoll said gravely, holding out his hand, "but if my mention of Levi's farrago has hurt your feelings, I beg your pardon."

Their aquatic adventure did not absorb comment at breakfast next morning, as Gertrude feared it would. It was divided in interest by an errand upon which Otho intended going, and which had humorous aspects as related by him.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY FREDERIC COLBURN CLARKE

*Gertrude made a sudden movement . . . as though she would touch the brown hands*

The cottage which hospitably sheltered them every one knew to be rented by Nicoll. They knew also that he was in treaty for the site upon the "cliff-walk" which made the fashionable end of the village, and which was defaced by the shabby homestead of the local miser, a worthy famed for his ignorance and eccentricity. These attributes manifested themselves, among other ways, in a distrust of bank accounts and check books, which, according to popular rumor, had induced him to bury the proceeds of former sales of portions of his farm. These proceeds had all been paid in gold, and it was to bring five thousand dollars in gold, insisted upon for the impending sale, that Otho's journey was necessary.

This announcement was followed by a chorus of questions.

"Does old Newton go with you to bring back his treasure in a potato sack?" some one demanded.

"I hope you do not mean to keep the money in the house overnight, Nicoll?" his aunt asked anxiously.

"There were burglars at the Stuarts' last summer!" a girl exclaimed.

"Nobody will suspect our wealth," Nicoll said, smiling. "Otho intends to bring it himself in his dress-suit case."

"Of course, some rumor from the bank might reach the roughs who always infest such a railway centre as the town," Otho conceded. "But Nick and I take turns in watching to-night, and to-morrow the payment will be made."

"Why not to-night, Mr. Britton?" Gertrude asked.

"Newton is harvesting!" Nicoll laughed. "It will take him until dark to get in his hay, and he refuses either to delay his work, or to count the gold except by daylight."

Whereupon, on Mrs. Britton's suggestion, every one agreed to keep silence until to-morrow, lest the servants, overhearing, might spread the story in the village, with disastrous results. Then they separated for the wonted variety of morning engagements at the seaside. Gertrude waited, upon one excuse or another, until all had departed, because she wished to avoid Nicoll for so long as she had not discovered the answer to certain questions as to which a wakeful night had brought no counsel. With a novel and a golf cloak she made her way to a bit of shingle, sheltered from possible observers at the cottage by a lofty rock, and there began her self-confession.

She had been accustomed to the opinion that she was a young woman of purposes as well defined as her principles, not given to the inspection of a desired object from conflicting points of view — but to-day she wavered in that opinion.

She had come to this pretty place prepared to accept Nicoll Britton, if he asked her — an 'if' inserted merely for euphony, though she had only known him a few weeks. She intended to make him an excellent wife, to watch over his lack of astuteness, and to see that his dignity was maintained by the respect which his character, if not his intelligence, deserved. But since last night misgivings assailed her.

Would this decorous loyalty from his wife entirely satisfy him? Sincere, unsuspicious as he was, would not her acceptance include to him such love as he offered? When he found such love lacking from her bond, would he not feel that generous faith of his defrauded? Would he not suffer far more cruelly than if she had forced upon him the knowledge of Otho Villars' dishonor? — a task from whose sternness she had shrunk ——

"You are not reading?" the man of whom she was thinking asked, close behind her. "May I sit here with you for a little?"

It must be, then, she told herself, with an odd pang at her heart, while her decision came to her. Better hurt him sharply now than crush the faith out of him month by month, year by year, in the long future he might live with a wife who did not love him!

Silently she drew away her white skirt that he should find place beside her. She fancied he was likely to encounter sentimental dangers as unhesitatingly as he had rushed up San Juan Hill — nor did she misjudge him.

"I am not good at words," he began at once, and though his voice was low she thought its steadiness would carry him through with that which he meant to say as he went on; "but somehow I believe you understand me pretty well without words. It should not be difficult, for I am not subtle, yet I like to feel that you make me out better than any one else ——"

She did not speak as he halted an instant, and he continued more hurriedly:

"I am a slow fellow, but this has come to me quickly — I have known you so brief a time, yet I seem to have loved you so long — I am not worthy of you in any way, but I love you — I love you!"

During another moment she did not speak — yet he added nothing more.

Somewhere in her consciousness was a smile — or perhaps a sob? — that this millionaire should be so unsuspicious of the motives for which she had intended to marry him; that his plea was only "love" — as though they were dwellers in Arcadia! But his folly had so far infected her that she resolved to answer him after his own fashion — divining that she should hurt him less if she left his ideal of her undimmed by hint of the mercenary intentions which this new reverence for him had abandoned.

She rose, he rising also, wordless and without effort to detain her.

"I am glad and I am sorry, I am proud and I am ashamed, that you should say this to me," she said softly. "I am glad and proud that a man whom I respect so highly should care so much for me; I am sorry and ashamed that there is not love enough in me to give you what you deserve."

He neither spoke nor lingered as she stepped back to the path, and they walked up the steep little lawn mutely to the veranda. There he held out his hand.

"This is 'good-by' to more than I shall ever hope again," he murmured. "Though, of course, I shall see you often, and love you always."

With this he went away.

Gertrude did not appear at luncheon, and her grandmother's maid brought a cup of tea to a very real headache at five

*(Continued on Page 18)*

# Tales of Old Turley—By Max Adeler

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## RUFUS POTTER'S ORATION

LATE in September a Grand Democratic Rally was to be held in Turley, with the Turley Brass Band at the head of a procession illuminated by torches and transparencies; and there was to be an outdoor meeting whereat several of the most eminent politicians in the State were to explain to the followers of Jefferson exactly how the country could be saved. It was thought probable that Colonel Bly himself would deign to be present and to say a few words to his faithful subjects; but it was announced as an assured fact that "our distinguished fellow-townsman, Mr. Rufus Potter, will also have the honor of addressing the meeting."

When Rufus saw this announcement in letters of blazing red upon the posters at the street corners he had mingled feelings of exaltation and trepidation. It was much to be designated in letters of that area and that hue as a distinguished citizen and to find himself ranked among the orators who were to make the welkin ring with patriotic speeches; but when Rufus thought of himself as in the act of speaking to an audience of Turleyites his heart sank within him, and there was in his knees a tendency to smite together which he had rarely noticed before.

He would have declined peremptorily the request of Billy Grimes and the committee for a few eloquent remarks had not Mrs. Potter strenuously insisted that it would be little short of madness for him to lose so good an opportunity to permit his genius to shine upon a community hitherto far too little appreciative of its quality; and, in order that the radiance might have assured brilliancy, she undertook for herself the very congenial task of preparing her husband's speech for him.

The work of composition would have been easier for her if she could have been permitted to frame it upon her lips, for fluency was one of her gifts; but while she labored strenuously to trace the oration upon paper she was consoled continually with the bright vision offered to her mind by Hope, which represented her, far in the future, in the act of preparing for Rufus Potter, the President-elect of the United States, an inaugural address which she and the children should listen to with rapture before driving home to the White House in a satin-lined barouche with four white horses.

Regarded as really her first effort at preparation of a political stump-speech, Mrs. Potter's little piece was not so very bad; and, in fact, when she had read it to a few of her women friends, infusing into her manner an intensity of enthusiasm of which Rufus was not capable, they made no pretense of concealing their admiration for the speech and for the writer. Mrs. Julia McGlory even went so far as to say that Henry Clay himself could not have done better.

The speech was as follows:

"Fellow-citizens: Your candidate is more used to being rocked in the cradle of the mighty deep where the fierce tempest rages than in standing upon the platform; but when my country summons me to help her in the hour of deadly peril I should deserve a traitor's doom if I did not heed her call. I stand before you as a friend of education and the poor workingman! I point with pride to my humble birth in a rude cabin in the primeval forest amidst the glorious mountains of Tennessee, and to these horny hands grimed with painful toil and the sweat of my brow from the earliest years of innocent childhood. Who so fit to guide the education of the young as the father of eight children, three boys and five girls, who in many a battle with the tempest and the storm on the bosom of the ocean seen foreign lands with his own eyes and knows geography to be true, and by gazing at the stars can steer a mighty ship safely o'er the billows?

"Will you vote against him for a man who sends his only child to a pay-school and becomes the vassal of the rich and the oppressor? Or will you rally to the workingman's candidate who pledges himself to have the schools teach Navigaton and Roman Numerals and American Grammar, and who never seen the starry banner of the free waving upon a foreign shore without feeling his heart beat for his native land and his bosom heave with emotion as he thinks of General Washington and his immortal words, '*Give me liberty or give me death*,' and vote on Tuesday for Rufus Potter for School Director, the man who always done his duty?"

It now devolved upon Rufus to commit the speech to memory and to have it so firmly lodged in his mind that he would remember every word of it amid the excitement and fear of his first appearance upon the platform.

Rufus employed diligence in trying to perform the task. Upon his wife's recommendation he learned two lines at a time, and when he had thoroughly mastered them she would have him repeat them to her. His greatest difficulty was that when he had the first two lines actually imbedded in his intellectual apparatus, so that it seemed as if he would remember them far into eternity, he found that as he passed on and learned the next two lines, the first two had vanished as completely as if they had been written in sand and washed out by the rising tide.

The aspiring statesman tried hard. Captain Bluitt found him sitting about the stable, in the dearborn or the haymow, or behind the smokehouse, muttering the words of the speech; he could be heard in the cellar as he poked the furnace or removed the ashes making reference in subdued tones to General Washington and the glorious mountains of Tennessee, or to his preference for death if liberty should be suddenly snatched away.

He gave up his solar observations from the centre of the asparagus bed; he went about the streets on errands with an air of abstraction, like a man who has something lying heavy on his mind; he sat up late at night and missed meals and forgot to black Captain Bluitt's boots, and began to have a great yearning look in his eyes as if his soul were reaching out toward ineffable things; and still, after a week of struggle and wrestle and suffering, Hannah found that there were only six lines that he could really count on, and they were so much confused as to be likely to convey to the hearer the impression that General Washington was born in the glorious mountains of Tennessee.

Only one week remained before the meeting, and Mrs. Potter perceived that something must really be done unless the very first step of the young statesman toward the White House should have disastrous consequences.

She rose to the requirements of the occasion. She learned the speech herself, and sacrificing her household duties as much as possible she followed Rufus about, in the stable, in the garden, and while he was in the house, repeating the words and having him say them after her, until she herself grew weary of them. She could have said them backward.

Neighbors who came home late at night and passed the Potter house went to rest convinced that there was a breach of the amicable relations that had always existed between this loving pair, because they seemed to be engaged in prolonged and sometimes violent altercation. But the voices were those of Rufus and of the wife who had soaring ambition for the husband, and who, far into the hours of darkness and in the repose of the chamber, compelled Rufus to follow her in repeating that speech which should start him on the road to glory.

When the great day came victory crowned the efforts of the assiduous wife, and she felt sure that Rufus had firm hold of his speech at last. He could eat no supper that evening, and while she and the children partook of the meal Rufus stood back by the stove and repeated the oration over and over, never missing more than two or three words.

But he was not happy. Indeed, as he contemplated the prospect it seemed to him hardly less than appalling. He began to feel that even the joy of sitting on the School Board and helping infant feet to climb that hard old hill of Learning was purchased dearly at the cost of such suffering as that which he should endure before bedtime. Even when his wife tried to fix his mental gaze upon the White House and to show him that that home of power and splendor lay directly before him, it seemed somehow to him that the cabin in the rear of Captain Bluitt's garden really had some distinct advantages of its own.

Rufus went to the meeting as a prisoner goes to the scaffold. His wife went with him and four of the older children, and she cheered his tremulous soul with the assurance that she would stand directly beneath the speakers' place upon the platform and hold the paper in her hand ready to prompt him if memory should forsake him.

The Grand Rally of the Jeffersonian Democracy of Turley was held on an open lot just east of the market-house. A platform of rough boards had been built in the centre of the lot, and it was surrounded by a railing and filled with seats for the members of the local committee and for other distinguished citizens who should lend the influence of their presence to this great uprising in behalf of the salvation of the country and the promulgation of sound political principles.

Around the sides of the platform were many flaring torches which blazed and flickered and smoked, and when Rufus came near he found a crowd which opened a way for him and looked at him with curiosity and high expectation. Mounting the platform, he found the committee standing and talking to several strangers, and when he had been welcomed he was introduced as "Mr. Potter, one of our candidates," to General Marcus Hook, of Clarion, to Captain E. L. P. Magruder, of Cayuga, and to the Honorable Arcturus M. Walters, Member of Congress from the Sixteenth District.

These were the gifted orators who were to thrill the Jeffersonian Democracy of Turley with eloquence, and be in turn held spellbound by the oratory of Rufus. It was the first time our candidate had found himself in such lofty company, and while he enjoyed the honor, he had most painful misgivings as to the consequences of the impending proceedings.

In a few moments the brazen harmonies of the Turley Brass Band were heard in the distance, and soon afterward the boom of the drum and the clangor of the horns suddenly rose into *fortissimo*, as the head of the procession swung around the corner and began to approach the platform.

The occupants of the structure took their seats, and while the Band filed off to the side and continued to play in the most clamorous and resolute manner the procession broke ranks with resounding cheers for Colonel Bly and the whole ticket, and the members mingled with the crowd that stretched far in front of the platform and far outward to the right and to the left.

When the concluding cadences of the music were heard, and the conscientious bass-drummer had thumped a final thump, Billy Grimes arose and proposed to organize the meeting by nominating a chairman and enough vice-presidents and secretaries to make a political party of considerable dimensions if they had consented to go off by themselves and to arrange for a movement of that kind.

These officers having been elected by a unanimous vote, and three more uproarious cheers having been given for the whole ticket, the chairman read the resolutions, which pointed plainly to the fact that the manifest purpose of the Whig party was to rend asunder and trample under foot the sacred heritage of the fathers and to reduce the poor workingman to a condition of perpetual poverty and serfdom.

This having been made clear to every Democrat present, the resolutions went on to explain that there was but one hope for the country and for the preservation of the institutions for which our patriotic sires had suffered and bled, and but one hope for the workingman so long ground beneath the merciless heel of the rich oppressor, and that was in the triumph of the Democratic party. The crisis was here! The time for action had come! The overthrow of Democratic principles at this important juncture simply meant that the Grand Old Republic, glorious in her history and freighted with hallowed memories and with high promise for the human race, would go reeling downward to everlasting ruin.

There was no dissenting voice when the meeting was asked to declare if those things were so. All Turley heard the shout of affirmation and the three more cheers for the whole ticket.

The Honorable Arcturus M. Walters, of the Sixteenth District, was then introduced by the chairman, and leaning far over the railing, with one hand beneath the tails of his coat and his other hand swinging in a vigorous manner through space, he demonstrated, amid enthusiastic cheering, that this was the hour when the patriots of the Democratic party must rise in their might and strike the shackles from the arms of the downtrodden laborer if there was any expectation that this feat would ever be performed.

The Honorable Arcturus M. Walters concluded his oration with dramatic recitation of a passage from the Curse of Kehama and of a quotation of an impressive nature from The Veiled Prophet of Khorassin. Mr. Walters had employed these two poetic fragments, according to the estimates of his friends, at more than two hundred and thirty-seven political meetings, and always with powerful effect upon his hearers.

As the honorable member from the Sixteenth District concluded his oration and resumed his seat, wiping the perspiration from his brow, General Marcus Hook, of Clarion, came forward and began his speech, as he always did, with two or three amusing anecdotes which were received with roars of laughter.

It was the turn of Rufus next. While the General talked and the audience laughed, Rufus sat upon the front bench filled with horror that almost paralyzed him. He hardly dared look at the crowd in front of him; but when he did venture to turn his eyes in that direction he saw Mrs. Potter, close by, smiling and joyful, and waving at him, as a cheering sign that he might feel confident, the paper on which his speech was written. He began to search his memory and his blood froze in his veins as he discovered that he could not recall a word of it. Then, suddenly, he saw far out in the crowd the face of Captain Bluitt, who was a Whig, but who was curious to hear Rufus speak. Rufus knew that he should not be able to stand up, much less to repeat the speech that had been written for him.

In an incredibly short time General Marcus Hook completed his oration, and as the applause died away the band began to play The Star-Spangled Banner. The hour had come for Rufus! He felt that he would rather die than to undertake the task that lay before him. He had an impulse to vault over the railing at his side and to fly. The crowd was too dense for that. He was almost distracted. But there was a loose board beneath his feet. It moved and left an opening when he kicked it. He pushed the board farther over, and as the band blew and pounded its way into the last bar but four of the glorious old anthem, Rufus let his feet dangle for a moment in the gap beneath him; then he slid from his seat through the crevice to the ground, crawled out upon all fours to the back of the platform, and ran home and hid himself in the haymow.

When the chairman rose he began to say, "We will now have the pleasure of hearing from our esteemed fellow-townsman, Mr. ——"

But Billy Grimes came forward, touched his elbow and whispered to him, and the chairman began again:

"Our esteemed fellow-townsman, Mr. Rufus Potter, I regret to say, has been taken suddenly ill, and I now have the pleasure of introducing to you Captain E. L. P. Magruder, of Cayuga."

Mrs. Potter walked sadly home with the four children, and not finding Rufus in the house her instinct directed her to the stable. She stood at the door and called her husband.

A response in a faint voice came from the haymow, and Rufus descended the ladder.

Mrs. Potter was able to persuade herself that he was really ill, and as they walked over to the house she put her arm about him and said:

"Never mind, Rufus; you will have another chance yet; and you'll be elected, anyhow."

But, as Mrs. Potter lay awake that night and reflected upon the exciting adventures of the evening, it seemed to her that the movement of the family toward the White House was likely to be not so rapid as she had anticipated.

The next week the Whigs held their meeting, and the posters announced that among the speakers would be "our popular fellow-townsman, Mr. Davis Cook." The meeting was held in the so-called Academy of Music, which had its auditorium upon the floor that was level with the street. It was brilliantly lighted for the occasion, and when the Turley Band, after parading about the town, marched into the building emitting music of the most exhilarating character the crowd surged in after it and soon filled all the chairs.

A chairman was elected, and scores of vice-presidents and secretaries were elected, and then the meeting proceeded to adopt resolutions representing that the Democratic party had no other purpose for existence than the overthrow of American institutions.

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**Editor's Note—This is the sixth of seven Tales of Old Turley, by the author of Out of the Hurly-Burly. Though a thread of continuity will run through all, each story is complete in itself.**

Then the chairman read a short address which was crammed full of animating observations, and when he folded up his paper amid tumultuous cheering he introduced Davis Cook to the audience.

"You all know very well, fellow-citizens," said Davis, "that I don't pretend to be no orator, but I never seen the time yet when I was afraid to look Turley people in the face and tell them what I think about things, though maybe what I happen to think mayn't be of so very much account, anyhow

"I am a candidate, as you all know, for School Director, and I want to be elected. I'm not a going to claim that I have any particular gift for directing schools, but I am going to claim that I'm about as good at that business as the men that are a doing it now. If the lightning would strike every man in the School Board who ain't fit to manage public education the Board could cast a unanimous vote in the Hereafter before the storm blew over. I needn't tell you, who know every mother's son of 'em, that there isn't enough real education in the School Board, taking them as they run, to fit out the smallest infant class in the colored people's Ebenezer Sunday-school; and, while I don't know much, I always knowed enough to know how much I don't know and to pick out people to do what I can't do.

"I have nothing agin Rufus Potter, the Democratic candidate for the office. So far as I can understand he's a kind father and a good husband and a fairish sort of a man at rubbing down a horse and shoveling dirt; but if Rufus Potter is qualified to direct public education then Davis Cook is qualified to work a plumber's joint on the Milky Way and to fix the attraction of gravitation so's it will pull upwards.

"I have always been a Democrat, and you are Whigs, but, the way I look at it, national politics has nothing more to do with the business of our School Board than hard-soldering has to do with horse-racing; and if you elect me I'll be neither a Whig nor a Democrat in that way but I'll see to it that the school tax ain't increased and that the children will have the right kind of learning stowed in their little brain-pans.

"The reason why I'm not running on the Democratic ticket is that the man who owns that party, and bosses the whole State, wouldn't let his serfs here in Turley put me on. He got mad at me because I opposed letting some of his money come into my church on the ground that it was probably stolen, and that a church ought to have clean money or stay poor. That's what I say now, and I don't care who hears me. I never seen Colonel Bly steal no money, but it seems pretty near certain that he began life by skinning the Shiawassee Injuns, and if he ever earned a dollar since by honest work he done it on the sly, after dark, for nobody ever seen him do it

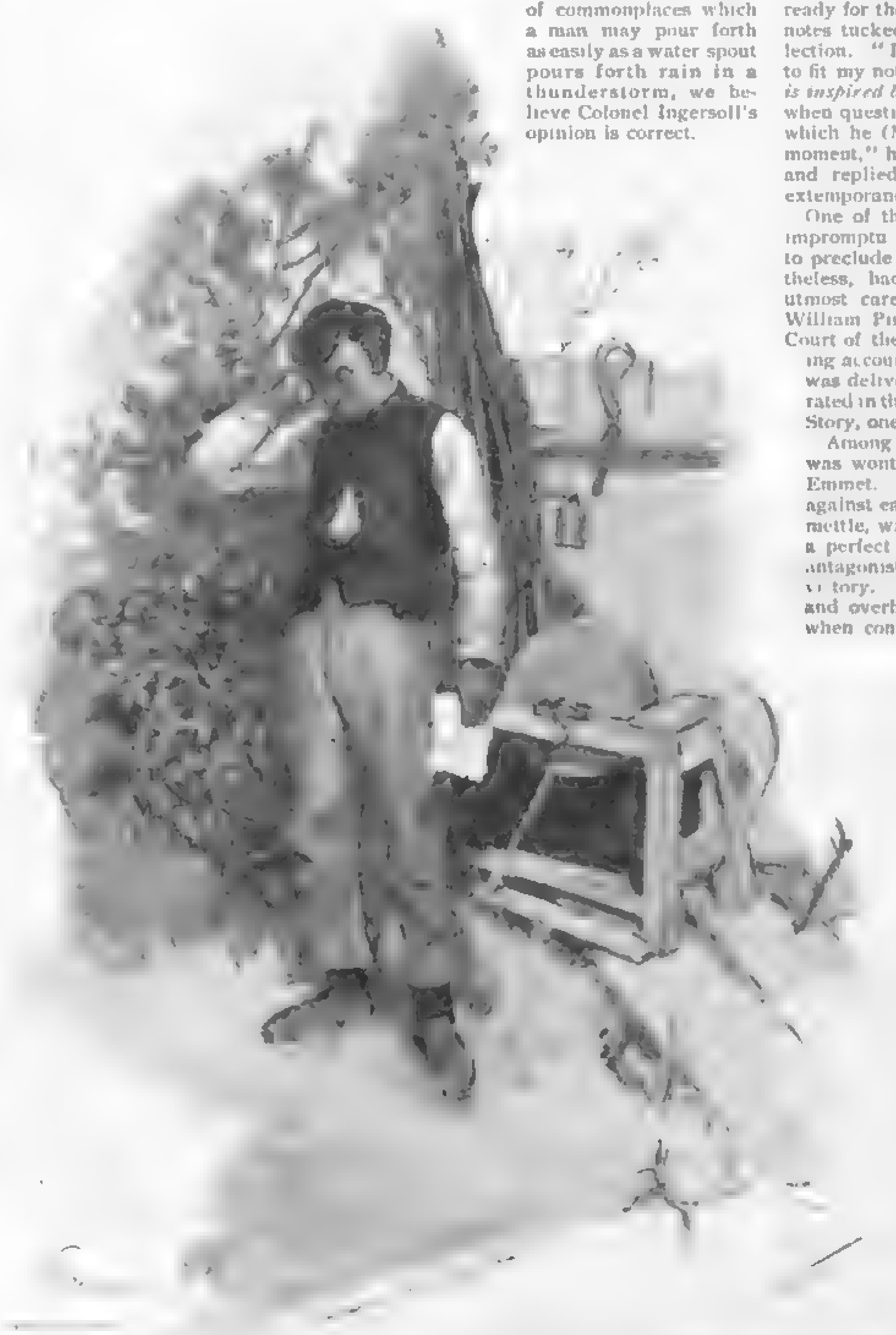
"I'm no better than my neighbors. I'm just a plain plumber who works hard at rough business; but there's written receipts somewhere for all the money I ever got since I earned journeyman's wages; and if any man knows of a dollar that I have that I didn't get honest all he has to do is to prove it and I'll pay a hundred dollars back for every dirty dollar he can find in my hands.

"I'm a master-plumber, and I'm proud of it. I don't say that Colonel Bly is a master thief, for I can't prove it; but if the evidence could be had, and I'd never seen it, I'd bet my horse and wagon against eight cents that when the documents were produced they would put the Colonel in the penitentiary unless the statute of limitation would serve to keep him out.

"That man rules this State without your leave or mine; but, as far as I've got any say in the matter, he can't rule me. I'm the sole owner of Davis Cook There was big talk over at the Democratic meeting the other night about the glorious institutions established by our Revolutionary forefathers. What they gave us was liberty and the right to govern ourselves. What we've got is boss government that robs you while it rules you. It would make Thomas Jefferson giddy if he could come back here and study Colonel Bly and Billy Grime. Our right is to manage our own government, and if we don't want to take the trouble to do that I'm in favor of hunting about and having a decent despot who will take care of us right, and not pick our pockets while he shouts for the Declaration of Independence.

"That's about all I have got to say. Give me a fair chance. I know you can find blow-holes in my grammar and that my spelling is often weak at the joints; but you put me in that School Board and I'll serve you honest, in spite of all the bosses in the State; see if I don't."

The applause that followed Davis Cook as he turned to resume his seat showed that he had made a strong impression upon the audience. He rose and bowed again and again as round after round of cheers was given for him.



*— behind the smokehouse, muttering the words of the speech*

# Impromptu Speech-Making —Is There Such a Thing?

## By William Mathews

IS THERE such a thing as extemporaneous speech-making? So many seemingly impromptu speeches in legislatures, "on the stump," and at public dinners, have been carefully elaborated beforehand and kept in pickle for days or weeks, that one finds it hard to believe that any admirable address, eloquent or witty—or even a felicitous reply—that ever thrilled or delighted its hearers, was an unpremeditated outburst. The late Colonel Robert Ingersoll, who had had a great deal of experience in public speaking, positively denied that there ever was, or will be, an impromptu speech. All speeches, he said, are prepared at one time or another; and the man who gets up and makes an offhand speech that counts for something, has got to be well equipped for it. Understanding by the word *speech* an effort of some moment, which has roused and persuaded or edified its hearers, and not mere "spouting," or a string of commonplaces which a man may pour forth as easily as a water spout pours forth rain in a thunderstorm, we believe Colonel Ingersoll's opinion is correct.

When an impromptu speech, so called, is really such, it reminds one of Peter Quince's saying to Snug in Midsummer Night's Dream, to whom was assigned the lion's part in the play: "You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but *roaring*" Ideas and words to express them, that are not thought out in advance by a speaker, are not likely to be thought of afterward by the hearer. Of course, we do not mean to say that the very words of every eloquent or powerful speech were all carefully chosen beforehand, although even that is the fact in hundreds of cases in which the hearer does not for a moment suspect it. But in every case where nicety and precision in the selection of words are required, as in an argumentative speech, or when grand, vivid, or picturesque words, as in many kinds of address, are to be used, the successful orator chooses beforehand the *ipsissima verba* of the important passages, especially of the closing sentences. Great themes demand time for their mastery. The subject must be brooded over day by day, and hour by hour, until by the half conscious, half unconscious processes of thought, all that is unessential, incongruous or foreign is sloughed off, and that which at first was but a faint suggestion of the speech has surrounded itself, by a kind of elective affinity of ideas, with appropriate imagery and illustration, and stands out at last in bold relief in full proportions.

Of all the orators who have held their hearers spellbound by the witchery of their words and gestures, Richard Brinsley Sheridan was apparently one of the readiest and most spontaneous. Nothing, however, can be further from the truth than this supposition. He stored up his wit, like Butler, the poet. When this great trickster, Sheridan, died, there were found among his papers drafts of all his speeches, which had been written and rewritten, previous to their delivery, with the utmost care. The private memoranda of his speeches show the exact places where the sudden exclamations were to be introduced

Daniel Webster told Peter Harvey that his own great speech in reply to Hayne, which is the high-water mark of modern eloquence, but which at the time was supposed to have been delivered without preparation, had been substantially prepared long before. When called upon suddenly to reply to the fiery Carolinian's attacks, which so alarmed the New Englanders at the Capital, he was entirely at ease and ready for the fray; for, as he said, he had "only to turn to his notes tucked away in a pigeonhole," and refresh his recollection. "If Hayne," he said, "had tried to make a speech to fit my notes he could not have hit them better. *No man is inspired by the occasion; I never was.*" At another time, when questioned by a young clergyman about "the speeches which he (Mr. Webster) had delivered upon the spur of the moment," he opened his large eyes with apparent surprise, and replied: "Young man, there is no such thing as extemporaneous acquisition."

One of the most remarkable instances of an apparently impromptu speech, made under circumstances which seemed to preclude all possibility of preparation, but which, nevertheless, had been carefully written beforehand with the utmost care, was the exordium of the great Marylander, William Pinkney's, famous argument before the Supreme Court of the United States in the Nereide case. The following account of the circumstances under which his exordium was delivered we give from memory as we heard it narrated in the class-room of the Harvard Law School by Joseph Story, one of the justices before whom the case was argued.

Among the giants of the bar with whom Mr. Pinkney was wont to grapple was the Irish exile, Thomas Addis Emmet. The first case in which these men were pitted against each other, and in which they tested each other's mettle, was one of maritime prize law, and Pinkney, being a perfect master of that branch of the law, in which his antagonist was but moderately versed, gained an easy victory. Not content, however, with that, he was haughty and overbearing in his manner, as he was too apt to be when contending with a foeman not worthy of his steel

Stung by this contemptuous treatment, Mr. Emmet determined to remedy his own deficiencies, and for the next four or five months devoted himself almost exclusively to the mastery of that department of the law in which he had failed to cope with the great Marylander

At the end of that time he was again engaged as counsel in opposition to Mr. Pinkney in the celebrated case of the Nereide, on the decision of which depended the ownership of a large and valuable cargo.

Mr. Emmet's address on this occasion was a masterpiece of argument, learning and eloquence, and placed him by universal consent in the very front rank of American lawyers. In his eloquent opening he spoke of the embarrassment of his situation, the novelty of the forum, and the deep interest which the public took in the case. He spoke in glowing terms of the genius and accomplishments of his opponent, whose fame had extended beyond the Atlantic, and then, in language the most delicate and full of pathos, he spoke of the contrast presented by his own life to that brilliant career—of the mournful circumstances which had exiled him from his native land—and of the ungracious treatment he had received from Mr. Pinkney at the former trial. All this was said with an air so modest and in tones so touching, that his hearers, including the veteran attorneys and gray-headed Justices of the Supreme Court, were moved to tears.

When he had concluded, Mr. Pinkney at once arose to reply, and prefaced his great argument—which in its learning, its logic and its rhetoric added to his fame—with an apology for his former unkind treatment of his antagonist, couched in the most elegant and polished language, and breathing sentiments so magnanimous and noble, that again the dignified assembly, attorneys and spectators were moved to tears

"When the court adjourned," said Justice Story, "I asked the author of this masterly and beautiful apology if he would not write out for me the substance of it, as nearly as he could recall it. 'Come with me to dinner,' was the reply, 'and we will talk about the matter.' I went to his house and dined with him," continued the Justice, "and, after we had arisen from the table, I reminded him of his promise. Thereupon he drew from a drawer and handed to me a large roll of manuscript, beautifully written, which, to my great surprise, proved to be *his entire speech, word for word as he had delivered it.*"

The truth was, that Pinkney had shrewdly suspected the course which Emmet would pursue, and had carefully prepared himself accordingly.

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The Saturday Evening Post is the oldest journal in America, having appeared regularly every week for the past 173 years, except for the short period when Philadelphia was in the hands of the British Army. The magazine was founded in 1728 and was edited and published by Benjamin Franklin, in whose day it was known as The Pennsylvania Gazette. In 1765 the publication passed into other hands, but its name continued until 1821 when it was changed to The Saturday Evening Post. The magazine was purchased in 1897 by The Curtis Publishing Company.

¶ Some people are so economical that they use condensed brands of the milk of human kindness.

¶ Man's besetting sins would not beset him so much if he would only set himself more against them.

¶ The only thing that is keeping any sectional feeling alive in this country is the constant iteration that it is dead

¶ It is impossible to say who will have the harder time getting to Heaven—the man who reads the colored supplements of the Sunday newspapers or the church member who never sees beyond his own denomination.

¶ It was gravely announced that the Czar went to France to witness the military spectacle. Amid the enthusiasm of the visit Russia borrowed $200,000,000 from Paris bankers. Evidently the Czar enjoyed the show.

¶ Professor Brander Matthews declares that "the split infinitive has a most respectable pedigree," and in defending it he brings up a long array of famous writers as witnesses. This is interesting, but is it proof? Possibly one might go back to original manuscripts and show that the same writers misspelled many of their words, but would such evidence upset the dictionary?

¶ Mr. John W. Mackay plans to lay a cable 8500 miles long to connect Hawaii and the Philippines with the United States. It will be a great convenience and of large financial value to this country. He hopes to have it working within two years. The fine thing about it is that no subsidy or guaranty is asked. In these days, when every corporation seems to want to dip into the public treasury for its private enterprises, it is cheering to find a big man ready to do a big thing in the right way without asking for public money to pay the bill.

¶ In the monuments that are to be erected to McKinley—and worthily erected to a good and beloved President—it is respectfully hoped that the selection of the designs and the supervision of the work will be placed in charge of experienced and competent men who have good taste and artistic appreciation. We have far too many caricatures of great men both in Washington and in other cities. This country is rich enough to afford the best, and nothing less than the best should be chosen. In this, therefore, the competitions should be thrown open to the world. King Edward selected an American artist—Mr. Abbey—to paint the chief picture of his elevation to the throne, because he was the best man for the work. The United States should not be less broad.

## Schoolboy Ethics in Business

SUPERSTITIONS die hard. Society abounds in what the sociologists call "survivals" of dead beliefs. The belief in the magic power of words was once general, if not universal. Men shrank from the curse of a parent, or a priest, or even a neighbor, as though the uttered words had some blighting influence, apart from the justice of the anger which prompted them. They believed that there were magic formulas, whose very utterance would raise the dead, evoke storms, blight the object of anger, and work other wonders without end. They uttered forms of words, to which they could attach no meaning, to ward off peril or to cure a wound or bruise. In their view, the articulate sound of the human voice was not simply a means to carry meaning from one brain to another, but was itself a potency of strange and unintelligible scope.

A curious survival of this is seen in the sacredness which the ordinary man attaches to his spoken word, and which would be all right if he did not limit it to that. Thus in business men safely agree with each other when the word of each is passed as to the terms of their contract, even without any written evidence of it such as the law might exact. They carry out such agreements to their ruin, not in a few cases, but in thousands, without flinching. It would be well if we could set this down to a high standard of business morality, but we cannot do so. The very same men will sell goods whose labeled descriptions they know to be utterly false, and will feel no self reproach for doing so. Their word has not been given in this case, and the buyer's business, they hold, is to look out for himself. And when they come into contact with people like the Japanese, who do not draw this queer line across business morality, they are very loud in denouncing them as unworthy of all confidence. They cannot understand men who make no more of speaking a lie than of acting it.

Much the same conditions are encountered in school life. The boy who will lie outright and in good set terms is rare. He is ashamed of himself for doing it, and he is frankly despised by his school-fellows, who seldom fail to make him know what they think of him. It is easy enough to bring him to a sense of his iniquity, and to get him to promise amendment. But it is very different with the acted and unspoken lie, involved in the use of translations, or in playing "hide and seek" in a recitation, or in cheating in examinations, or smoking on the sly, and the like. In all such cases the teacher is expected to "take care of himself," and to enforce his rules as best he can. The boy will take his punishment, when caught, without much grumbling, as though he had been playing a game and had got the worse of it. He does not feel about being caught in any such deception as he would feel about being caught in direct lying. He may feel bound to speak the truth, but not to "do the truth," as the good Book phrases it.

It is not possible to bring society up to the right level of social morality until this artificial distinction, and every other artificial distinction, have been eliminated from thought and from practice. Business life especially requires a purification from acted falsehood in the shape of adulterations, exaggerating labels, and a score of similar abuses. *Caveat emptor*, "let the buyer look out for himself," is a valid maxim only when the buyer and the seller are on an entire equality as regards their knowledge of the matter in hand, and that is a case of rare occurrence. In all cases we should be, as Emerson says, more anxious not to inflict an injury on our neighbor than not to receive an injury from him.

*Happiness often depends upon near relatives keeping their distance.*

## Southern Railroad Expansion

EVERYBODY that reads the papers knows in a general way that the South has made great strides toward prosperity in the last few years, and that the financial condition of the Southern people no longer depends entirely on the cotton crop. Of Southern coal, almost unheard of before the war, millions of tons are now mined every year, Southern iron competes in home and foreign markets with that of many Northern mines and mills, the South is almost the only source of commercial phosphates, the demand for which increases steadily, and Southern fruits and vegetables fill Northern markets through a full half of every year. In the far Southwest have been "struck" some of the freest flowing petroleum deposits of the Western Hemisphere, and though some fingers may be burned before proper market and transportation facilities can be obtained for the product, there can be no doubt that in time petroleum will become a source of great wealth to the region in which it has been found

But the greatest promise of Southern prosperity is found in the recent very rapid increase of railway construction. On any American railway map of a few years ago the mazes of black lines ended abruptly at the Potomac and the Ohio; farther South the lines were so few as to seem lonesome. In later years, however, certain Southern States have outdone some energetic Northern ones in additions to railway systems and in constructing new lines. North Carolina, with a population about equal to that of New Jersey yet with very few manufacturing interests compared with those of the older State, has suddenly acquired new railways at a rate that has made her total fifty per cent. greater than that of New Jersey. The greatest increase of railway building in the last year or two was not in Northern or Western States, but in Arkansas and Georgia—two States abounding in natural resources that never could have been turned into money until new means of transportation were provided. Alabama, the "Iron State" of the South, has but a quarter as many inhabitants as New York, but she has about half as many miles of railway track as the Empire State. Arkansas has three times as much railway mileage as Connecticut, and Georgia's railway system is twice as long as that of Massachusetts

Unlike the West, the South has built railways more to market its products than to "open up the country," but no one can doubt that a large increase of population will result. Until recently the South has gained population only by natural increase, for would-be immigrants have been deterred by the difficulty of reaching such lands as were for sale or were open to settlement under the Homestead and Preëmption Acts, though it is generally known that Southern winters are short and mild, that most of the soil in the Gulf States is extremely fertile and well-watered, that building material can be found everywhere, and that land is cheaper than anywhere else in the Union, if comparative nearness to markets and transportation facilities is considered. There is room in the Southern States for millions of South Europeans of a valuable class that no other part of the Union has been able to attract—the class that for centuries has subsisted comfortably on very small farms by getting the greatest possible results from every acre, and that is as peaceable and law-abiding as the best of our own. Sooner or later the South will get many of these people, to its own great gain and that of the Union at large, but its growth does not depend upon them alone; the native born American has an irresistible tendency to make his way to every part of the country that is reasonably accessible and in which there seem to be new opportunities of making money.

*Too often the boy born with the golden spoon has poor respect for the father who made the wealth that bought the spoon, but who ate with his knife.*

## Bars for Our Water-Gates

A FEW days ago some of the newspapers printed a ten-line Washington dispatch, the size of which was out of proportion with the information conveyed, for it announced that the War Department had ordered the sixth and final increase of the Artillery Corps, as provided for by recent Congressional enactment. This increase will enable the regular army to keep light batteries in condition for field service and also to man the various fortifications and guns which protect our seaports

The nation's duty to protect the cities through which passes the enormous mass of exports and imports which have excited the wonder and envy of all other civilized nations has, ever since the Civil War, been the text of many Presidential messages and of annual reports of all Generals-in-chief of the army. Yet the practical effect of all that had been said on the subject was so little that when we found ourselves at swords'-points with Spain three years ago we had scarcely a great seaport on which Admiral Cervera might not have inflicted great damage had his Government given him a free hand. Cervera's fleet could not have captured and held any of our cities; even in the War of 1812 the British fleet could not hold the city of Washington, but the damage it inflicted was so humiliating that Americans still blush with shame.

The Spanish scare, of which army and navy officers still talk with one another, was not the only one of its kind since long range artillery came in. When President Cleveland, annoyed by the Venezuelan situation a few years ago, threw Uncle Sam's glove in Britain's face, there was not an American port which the British navy could not have forced; as to that, several could have been forced simultaneously and the damage done in each would have affected the entire nation. The cities would not have been utterly destroyed, but even had they been merely blockaded, does any one doubt that the prices of wheat, pork, cotton, corn and all other articles of export would have fallen so greatly as to have ruined business of every kind? To oppose even Cervera's little fleet of four armored cruisers, had it dashed into our waters, we had many forts without proper guns, some splendid guns that had not yet been mounted, and, worse still, many forts and guns without trained artillerists to man them.

The old excuse for neglecting our forts was that we were extremely unlikely to go to war with any one, much less to be attacked. We made cannon as fine as any in the world, but apparently only to show that we could do it: some of these fine weapons are still awaiting "emplacements," and even carriages; others, which were in position, were intrusted during the Spanish war to militia, who were brave and willing, but who knew nothing about artillery

Where there is nothing to tempt thieves and nothing that can be harmed it may be safe to leave doors without locks, but every American who has property or prospects of any kind should feel safer on knowing that at last we have locks and bars at our national gateways

# Gardening Under Tents

NOWADAYS, if one wants a bit of foreign climate, one does not go to it, but prefers to manufacture it on the premises, as one might say—at all events, if it is to be for horticultural purposes.

This is what is being done just at present with regard to Sumatra tobacco. Inasmuch as that particular variety of the herb nicotian is exclusively tropical, the growing of it in this country under ordinary conditions is out of the question. Accordingly, in attempting to raise the plant on our own territory it has been necessary to create by artifice patches of torrid zone, so to speak, which imitate in respect to temperature and air-moisture that equatorial region where cigar-wrappers of the finest quality, as yet unplucked from the stalks, delight the eye of the traveling smoker

How to accomplish this was a discovery wholly accidental, but the solution of the problem is represented by immense tents of cheesecloth erected upon a framework of scantling and extending over many acres Some of these tents, indeed, far surpass in size the biggest ever spread by any circus though their height is never more than nine or ten feet. Beneath them the plants of Sumatra tobacco are set out in rows, and such gigantic size do they attain that the topmost leaves actually touch the cheesecloth roof when they are full-grown

The air inside the tents is very warm, and just enough sunlight filters through the cheesecloth to give the tobacco plants the amount of it they need. A shady place in a tropical climate is what the Sumatra wrapper requires for its proper development, and under the conditions described it finds itself perfectly at home. Insect enemies are shut out, as well as the scores of disease-producing fungi that are always floating about in the air, and so in this curious sort of a hothouse the huge "weeds," as non smokers would call them, thrive amazingly

### *Florida Growers the Discoverers*

What led originally to this odd discovery was the circumstance, as observed in Florida by growers who were trying to raise Sumatra tobacco, that plants which happened to be in the shade developed much more rapidly The difference was so marked that some enterprising persons erected extensive overhead screens of laths to keep off part of the sunlight, the result being that wonderful crops were obtained. Indeed, the plants attained such Brobdingnagian proportions as to excite amazement, and the building of lath sheds was undertaken on a large scale

Eventually, however, it was ascertained that the cheesecloth tent not only serves all the purposes of a lath protection, but is more satisfactory. It provides for the plants a humid and warm atmosphere like that of the tropics, with the additional advantages of defense against insects and security against frost. This last was a particularly important point in Connecticut, where it was decided to try to produce the Sumatra tobacco under these artificial conditions

Careful study, extended over the whole of the United States by experts of the Department of Agriculture, had shown that the peculiar kind of soil required by Sumatra tobacco was to be found nowhere except in Florida and in Connecticut. Therefore, when the experiments above quoted had proved successful in the Flowery Peninsula it was decided to make similar trials in the Nutmeg State Such trials have been conducted on an elaborate scale recently at Poquonock, near Hartford, and they have proved that the much-prized wrapper can be produced in that region as advantageously as in its native home; and that it is quite as good as the imported leaf

### *The Tobacco Giants of Connecticut*

The authorities at Washington are of the opinion that the home grown Sumatra tobacco will soon crowd the imported article out of the American market. Inasmuch as from $6,000,000 to $8,000,000 worth of this kind of wrappers for cigars is now imported annually into this country, it will be realized that the change will put a great deal of money into the pockets of Yankee growers. Eight million dollars means eight million pounds, the price of the raw material when entered at our ports being about $1 a pound. To this is added $1 85 a pound for duty, so that the article becomes decidedly expensive by the time it reaches the hands of the manufacturer

It is not the flavor of the Sumatra tobacco that makes the demand for it. It is, in truth, almost flavorless and tasteless But this is exactly what is wanted in a cigar-wrapper the filler giving the flavor, and the Sumatra leaf possesses the smoothness and beauty of texture which the market demands. Only the edges of the Connecticut leaf can be utilized for such a purpose, whereas, by simply removing the midrib, the Sumatra leaf will yield wrappers for two cigars.

These giant tobacco plants, nine feet high, look like a veritable forest inside of one of the great tents. The full-grown stalks are not cut down in the ordinary fashion, to be afterward plucked, but the leaves are cut off carefully one after another as they ripen, the bottom ones usually reaching maturity before those that are higher up. Then they have to be put through a peculiar process of fermentation in bulk, quite unlike that which ordinary tobacco undergoes

### *Cheesecloth Bought by the Acre*

Under the tent the plants are cared for with extraordinary pains, small quantities of poison (Paris green and meal mixed) being dropped into each developing bud, to keep off the dreaded bud worm, while here and there over the covered field are placed tall stands bearing plants of jimson weed. The horn fly, another much feared enemy, inasmuch as it is the mother of the horn-worm, visits the blossoms of the jimson weed, and finds in them a deadly poison which it drinks, and so perishes For, as a matter of fact, it is not possible to keep the insects out altogether, and accordingly such precautions have to be taken

It is understood that a trial of this new method of raising tobacco is to be made on the island of Cuba, and only the other day one of the largest growers in the Vuelta Abajo telegraphed to a mill in Fall River for cheesecloth enough to cover fifteen acres arranging at the same time for a shipment of the galvanized wire which is used to help support the cloth roof. This planter, whose estate is fourteen miles from the city of Havana, has taken with him to Cuba an experienced man from a Connecticut farm where the tent method has been under successful trial

Large amounts of capital are being invested in this new industry, which, as has been reckoned, will add $1,000,000 almost immediately to the annual value of the tobacco crop of Connecticut. For the near future there is a vastly greater promise of money recompense—a reward to be drawn from an accidental discovery that is surely one of the most remarkable in the history of agriculture

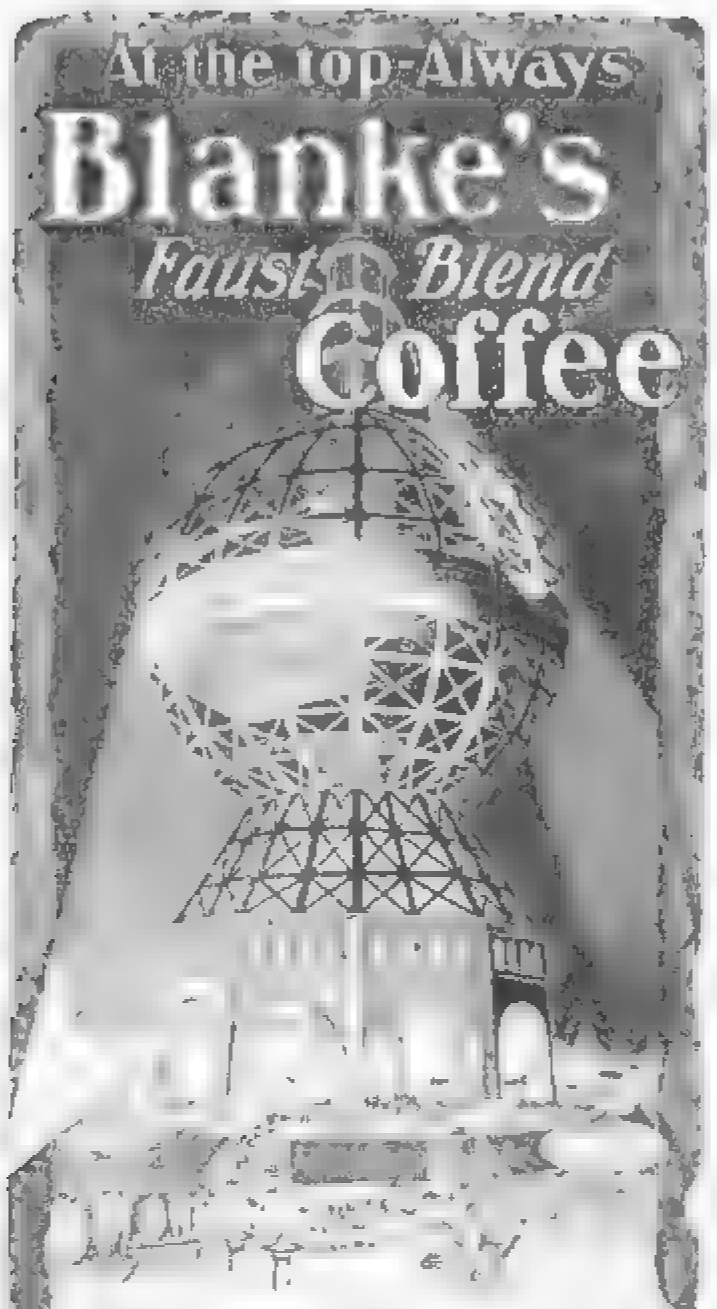
### *Other Lovers of the Shade*

This method having proved exceedingly successful with Sumatra tobacco in Connecticut and Florida, enterprising persons conceived the notion of trying it on vegetables of various kinds, and the results obtained have been surprising

The tents are of cheesecloth, seven or eight feet high, and are made to cover an area of some acres, the vegetables being planted beneath them in the ordinary fashion. When they come up they proceed to grow at an astonishing rate, running chiefly to leaves, however. Thus potatoes do not do well at all, forming no roots worth mentioning and only small tubers

But tomatoes thrive magnificently under the treatment, and so do melons, making a great development of vine and producing large and numerous fruits. Cabbages, lettuce, cucumbers, peas and beans prosper greatly. The lettuce grows fast and is very tender, though it hastens to maturity and goes to seed rapidly. However, this would be no disadvantage from the viewpoint of a market gardener, who could dispose of it every day as it reached the proper stage

Under the cheesecloth tents the vegetables are protected against insect enemies to a great extent, and also against frost A real freeze, of course, will freeze up everything notwithstanding the tent, but plain frost is the thing really dreaded in the production of early spring garden-truck. It is liable to come any clear night in early spring, and may occur when the temperature of the air is as high as 42 degrees Fahrenheit, the twigs and leaves of plants being sometimes ten degrees cooler than the atmosphere. But the tent serves as a sort of blanket, and keeps the heat of the plants from being radiated off into space.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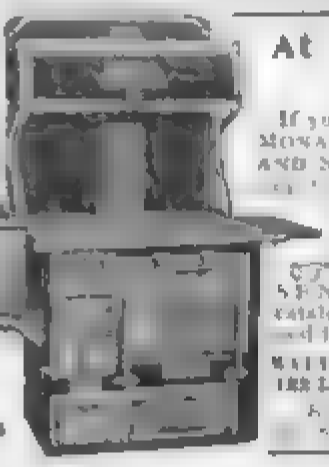
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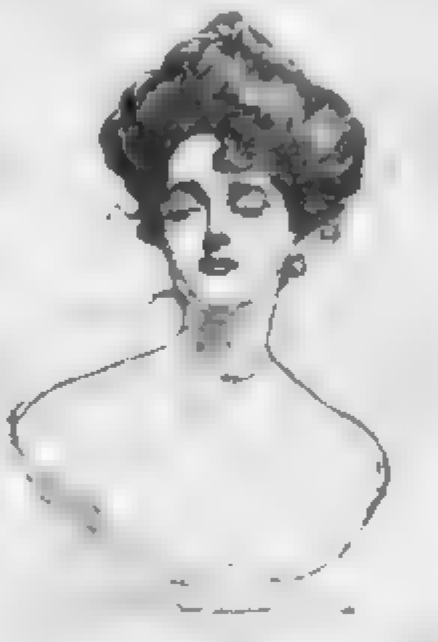

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If we want to read Kim in a spirit of unalloyed content we must accept its impossible young hero without reserve or protest. There never was such a wonderful little boy since the first little boys were born outside the gates of Eden; but it is not for us to quarrel with his amazing sagacity. An orphan waif, the son of an Irish soldier, but reared from infancy among the low-caste Hindus of Lahore, Kim's baby feet have trodden devious paths, his baby eyes have seen much that is commonly hidden from childhood. He is as acute as a young Hermes, as unscrupulous as a little Autolycus. A vagabond by instinct and by necessity, he attaches himself to a wandering Tibetan lama, and, in the capacity of chela, or disciple, follows the holy man in an endless search for the "River of the Arrow," the sacred river that washes away sin. The tale of their wanderings is the very cream of the book, for never were pictures of the Orient drawn with such brilliant colors, never were the shifting scenes incidental to pilgrimages all the world over described with such admirable art. From page to page the reader hurries, carried swiftly and gayly along with that strong tide of life, watching the village bride shrinking behind the tinsel curtains of her litter; listening as the sharp-tongued old Rajput widow alternately revils her servants and importunes the careless gods for a second grandson; giving wide berth to the polluted Sansis, who contaminate the air they breathe; and laughing at the raillery that passes swiftly from mouth to mouth, envenomed raillery, wise with the bitter wisdom of the East. It is a veritable misfortune when Kim is picked up by his father's regiment, and sent, sorely against his will—and ours—to school. What has such an imp to do with desks and copybooks and grammars? His classroom is the world; his pedagogues, all things that walk thereon.

The story of the boy's training for the secret service, and of his early exploits in that strange field, is less convincing, if not less interesting, than the account of his childish adventures. It is hard to credit England with the wily depths of policy which Mr. Kipling describes; even granting that her agents are, for the most part, natives, who rely more on their own wits than on the wisdom of the Sahibs who employ them. Not for her acuteness is Great Britain venerated among the nations. Indeed, even in Mr. Kipling's book, the Englishmen are singularly unimpressive; but of Mahbub Ali, the Afghan horse-dealer, and of Hurree Babu, the Bengali, one might believe anything. As for the Maharanee, she is simply the most delightful old woman we have met for many a year. If India holds many such grandmothers there is small need to vex our souls over the downtrodden females of the East.

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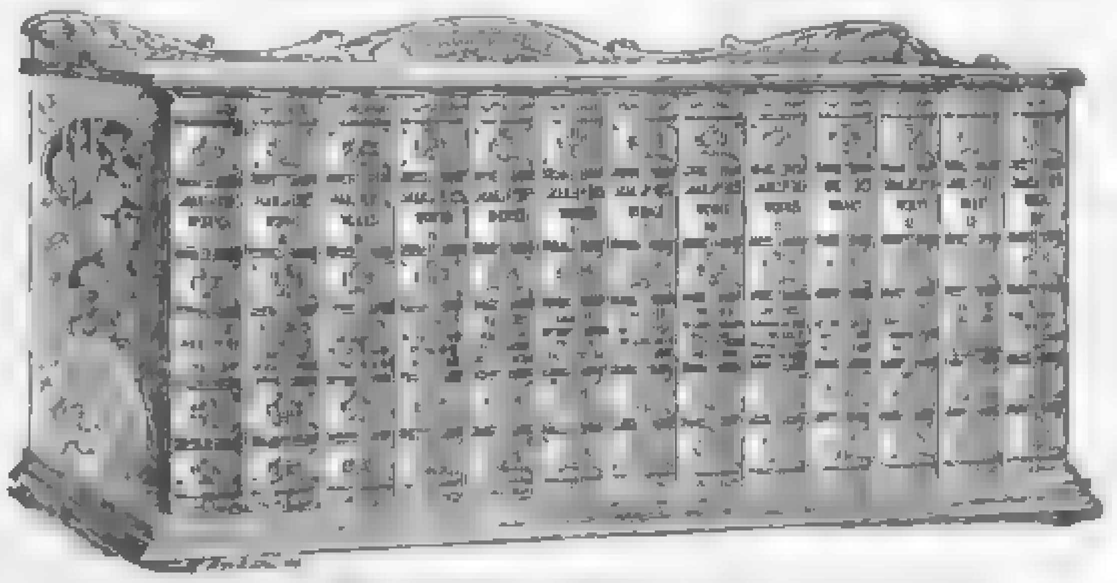
The bottom part of this advertisement describes the new edition as fully as the limited space will permit



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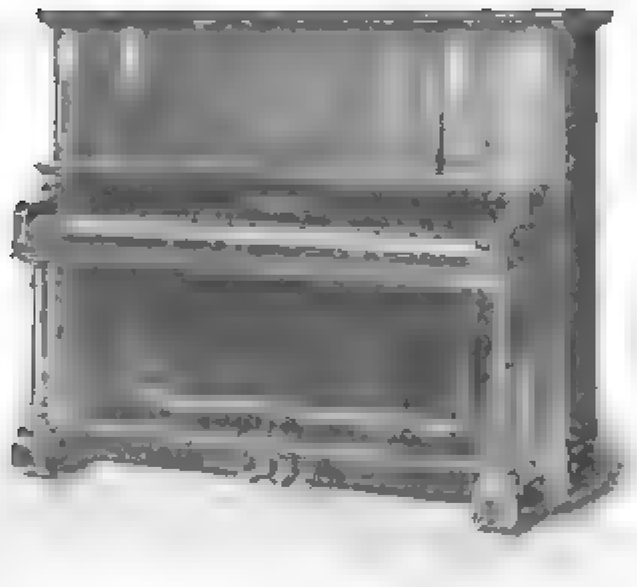

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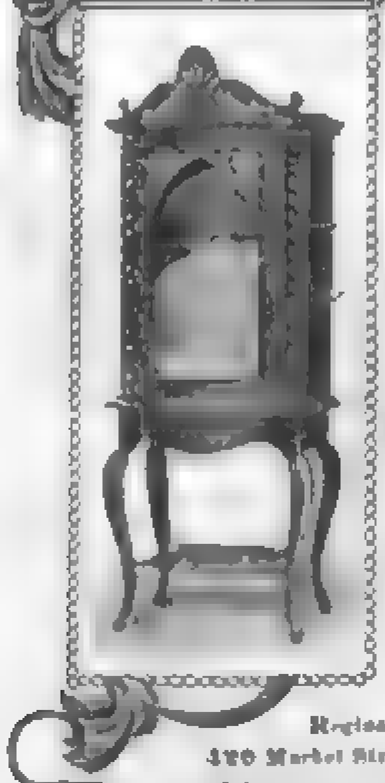

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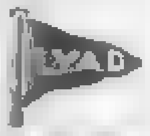

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he has utilized some archaic and time worn material, which has been part of the novelist's stock in trade for many weary years, but which, in his hands, acquires new charm

There is a faint flavor of Eugene Wrayburn about his hero, Charley Steele, a cool, daring, supercilious, dissipated lawyer, with a monocle, a genius for impertinence, a remarkable contempt for the opinions of his fellow-men, and a still more remarkable power of influencing their lives. Even the young minister, whose church he occasionally attends, "found it difficult to preach when Charley was in the congregation. He was aware of the subterranean and half-pitying criticism going on in the barrister's mind." Finally the Rev Mr Brown abandons his ministry and his creed because Steele asks him awkward questions—a readiness of response which reminds us of the ever-famous churchman who gave up all his beliefs because "some one told him they weren't true.

From these dallyings with villainy Steele leaps to the heroic with a bound. Stung by the reproaches of an unloving and unlovely wife, he settles on her his valuable real estate, forgives her scamp of a brother for forging his name, and is then opportunely knocked on the head by river riders and sent floating down the stream, to be picked up by a murderous raftsman whose forfeited life he has snatched from the gallows five years before. Mind and memory have been deadened by the blow (an antique device, unworthy of so able a craftsman as Mr Parker), but a surgical operation restores him to normal conditions; and he recovers just in time to read in a belated newspaper that his wife has married her old lover, and that his brother-in-law has dexterously shifted the crime of embezzlement upon his shoulders. He is a dead man with a dishonored name It seems singularly hard lines; but Steele accepts the situation with philosophy, and settles down as a tailor's assistant in a little French-Canadian village, where a really nice girl falls promptly in love with him.

And such a story! Not one dull page in it! Not one craven surrender to that base spirit of realism which drags a novelist from the free fields of fancy, and keeps him groveling amid probabilities. Mr. Parker scouts probabilities, and, with splendid imperialism, forces all the circumstances of life to play into his hands. His Canadians are delightful. The Seigneur, with his kind heart, quick temper and antiquated vanities; the good and simple Curé; the notary and his jealous wife; the morose old tailor—all these people are drawn with careful art. Even Steele's virtues—though of a somewhat glittering order—do not offend. He saves the life of the Reverend Brown, now become an itinerant quack doctor; he saves Rosalie from the burning church; he magnanimously forgives old Trudel, who drops a red-hot iron cross on his breast while he is sleeping; he dies, by his brother-in-law's hands, in defense of the church funds. The dazzled reader is tempted to say, with Rosalie, "He was a great man;" but the Curé, who knows the measure of men, only smiles benignly as he stands by the humble grave.

—*Agnes Repplier.*

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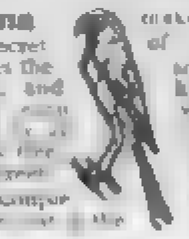

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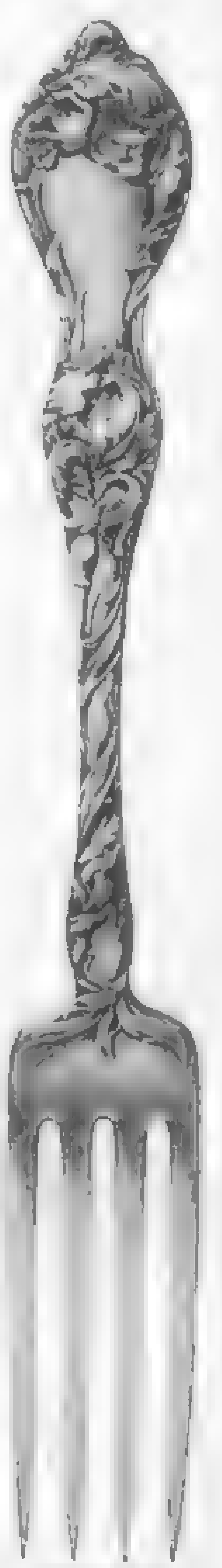

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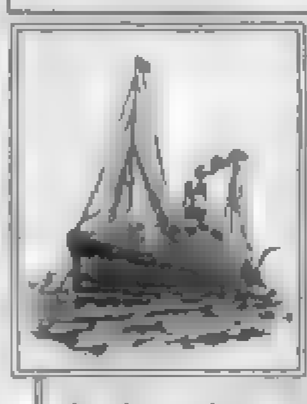

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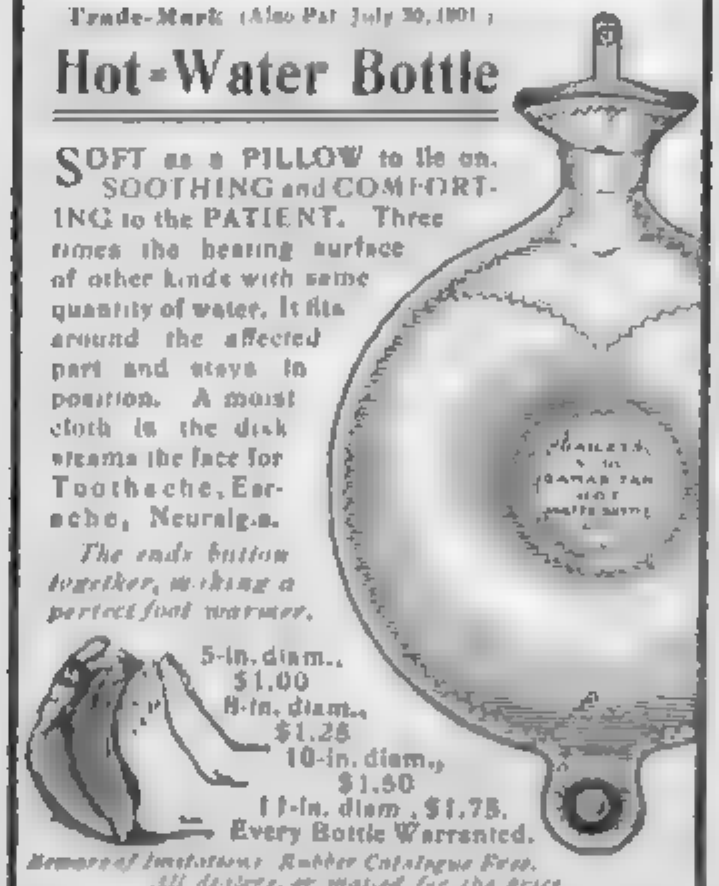
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# Men & Women of the Hour

## Mr. Coler and the Cranks

[illegible]

COMPTROLLER BIRD S. COLER, of New York City, who was a prominent candidate for the New York mayoralty nomination, owes much of his rapid rise in politics to his quick mental action. This mental acuteness manifests itself in no way more strongly than in the manner in which he deals with the multitude of cranks who lie in wait for every prominent person in New York

Not very long ago a man who had the appearance of a prosperous, substantial citizen presented himself before the Comptroller

"I have come," said the stranger, "to collect that million dollars the city owes me."

"What million dollars?" demanded Mr Coler

"The million that is owing me."

The Comptroller scrutinized his caller sharply and in a flash realized that he had to do with a lunatic. He saw that the man carried a small leather handbag, which might, or might not, contain dynamite, as in the case of Mr. Russell Sage's caller. Almost any other man would have called one of the numerous attendants about the office and would probably have precipitated a scene which might have led to serious consequences. Not so Mr. Coler. He quietly asked his caller to sit down, and then explained to him that at that hour there was not a million dollars in cash in the office, as all deposits of moneys had been made earlier in the day. "However," he added genially, "if you will come back in the morning I shall have the money here for you."

"By the way," said the Comptroller, as the man rose to go, "you had better give me your name and address so that I can have the necessary papers made out and ready for you to sign when the money is delivered."

Early next morning two men with a hand-satchel called at the address the man had left. They said they had been sent by Mr. Coler to go with the man directly to the bank to get the money in order to save time. A carriage was in waiting outside. The unsuspecting lunatic greeted his callers with a beaming face and accompanied them without hesitation. The carriage was driven straight to a long, one-story building located in the Bellevue Hospital grounds and popularly known as the insane pavilion. Before the crank knew what had happened he had been regularly committed

During the Rapid Transit agitation a dignified gentleman strolled into the Comptroller's office one day and begged a few moments of Mr. Coler's time, to submit, as he said, a scheme that would solve all the difficulties connected with the problem of getting from the Battery to Harlem in fifteen minutes

"My idea," he explained, "came to me one day when I was crossing the river on a ferryboat. I was in the rear of the boat and something happened in front. I ran through to see what the trouble was. Instantly it occurred to me that I was traveling faster than anybody else on that boat, for the boat was going and I was going at the same time

"And what," asked the Comptroller, "has that got to do with rapid transit?"

"Simply this; that the only feasible plan for getting from the Battery to Harlem in fifteen minutes is to build a road where the rails will move as well as the cars. Don't you see you'd be going twice as fast as though your rails were stationary?"

"But how would you stop your cars?"

"H-u-s-s-h!" said the stranger, looking around apprehensively; "that's my secret. You put me right with the Rapid Transit Commission and assure me protection for my idea, and I'll explain everything"

"Um," said the Comptroller; "that's a pretty good scheme, I guess. But there's a law in New York State against movable rails Now, I'll give you a card over to the Corporation Counsel. If he can see his way clear to overcoming the legal obstacle I'll present you to the Commission."

The stranger, his face beaming, hurried to the office of Mr. Whalen, the Corporation Counsel The Comptroller looked after him with a grin. He had killed two birds with

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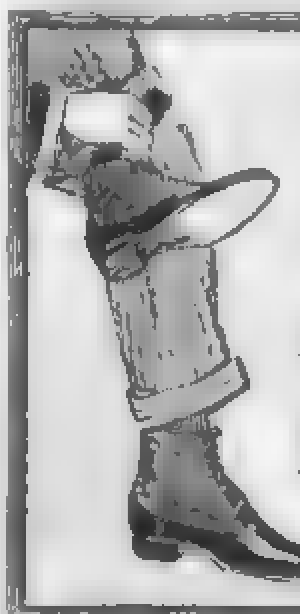

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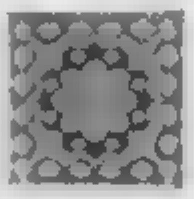

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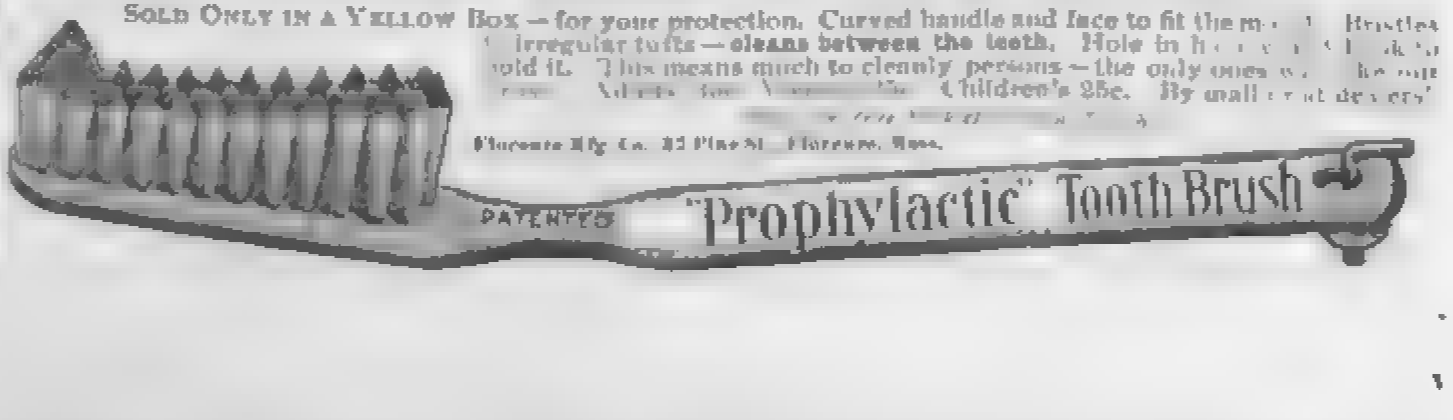

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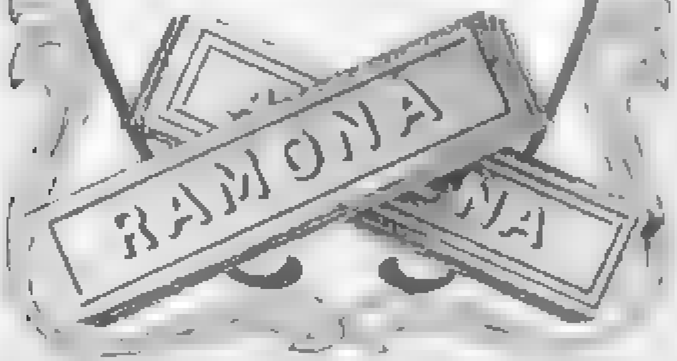

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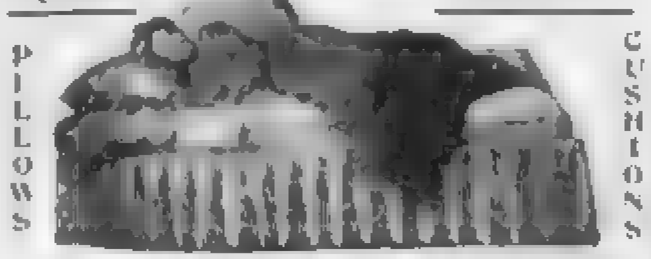

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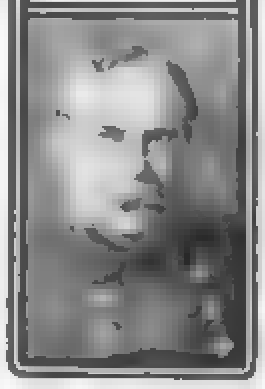
one stone. He had gotten rid of a troublesome crank and, incidentally, had unloaded trouble on Mr. Whalen with whom, for about six months past, he had been having a series of active legal sparring matches

## Winning Command of the Oregon



Capt Charles E Clark

CAPTAIN CHARLES E. CLARK, who brought the Oregon safely at high rate of speed half-way round the globe in time to join in the sea fight off Santiago and who has now been made Commander of the Naval Asylum near Philadelphia is one of the most skillful chess players in the United States. Before his selection to command the Oregon he was in charge of the gunboat Bennington which was frequently stationed in San Francisco Bay. His favorite rendezvous on shore was the social room of the Mercantile Library Club of the California metropolis Numbers of adroit chess players congregated there, but, no matter how adept, they all went down in defeat before Captain Clark When engaged in a game he played with great intensity. Perspiration bathed him and invitations to refreshment were unheeded There was no money at stake, but the Captain played as if struggling for a fortune

This trait of doing thoroughly whatever he set out to accomplish was considerably talked about, and finally the flattering gossip reached the Navy Department, and when it became necessary to select a man for the critical work of doubling a continent in time of war, the officer who was known to engage in even a social game as if his life depended on the outcome was strongly recommended

There was a discussion over the question in Secretary Long's office and afterward in the Bureau of Navigation. Various incidents in Captain Clark's career were cited to demonstrate his fitness for such an undertaking

"But has he the stick-to-it-iveness to take him clear through?" was asked by one officer

"Did you ever see him play chess?" rejoined another

No one else present had seen him in a game and they asked, moreover, what that had to do with the case

"Everything," was the Clark man's reply "Strategy as learned on the chess board is not a bad training as a preliminary to naval tactics," and then he told of Captain Clark's intense and determined application when engaged in the game. "If any man," he added, "can pilot that battleship safely through the Pacific and bring it promptly into action in Atlantic waters, it's Clark."

Officials in the Navy Department seemed to be impressed. A few hours later orders were sent Captain Clark to command the Oregon and to sail with her for Cuban waters.

## A Lieutenant's Clever Ruse

General MacArthur, despite his distinction and his many successes, modestly prefers to speak the praises of others

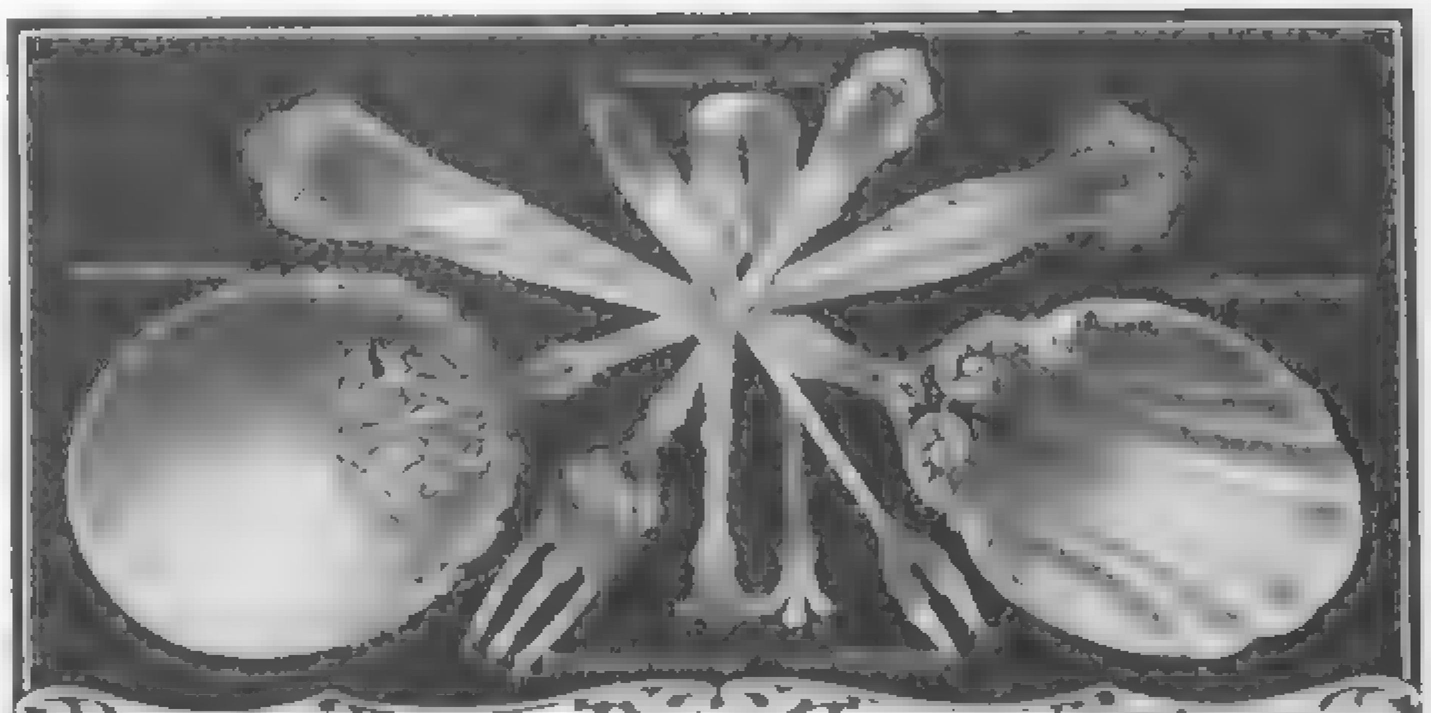
To a naval officer whom he entertained at Manila some time ago he told a good story about Lieutenant J. C. Gillmore, U. S. N., who was captured with seven men of the Yorktown at Baler, Luzon Island, in April, 1899, by the Philippine insurgents, and held prisoner for months in the mountains

One of the prisoners, who spoke Spanish fluently, was commanded to translate into English decoy letters addressed "To Whom it May Concern" stating that the bearers were warm friends of the Americans, and had failed in aiding them to escape only because of the vigilance of the insurgent guards

"It was the intention," said General MacArthur, "to have these letters used whenever the bearers might be captured by our forces, and also as passports for spies Those superintending this literary coup had sufficient knowledge of English to make out the general sentiment of the document

"Lieutenant Gillmore insisted," continued the General, "that as chief officer among the prisoners he be given the privilege of looking over what had been written. Nodding [illegible] each letter he added to each the [illegible] Nit which the insurgents accepted as an [illegible] of the papers."

General MacArthur showed one of these letters "You can imagine," said he, "the unbounded admiration it created for the resourcefulness of Lieutenant Gillmore"



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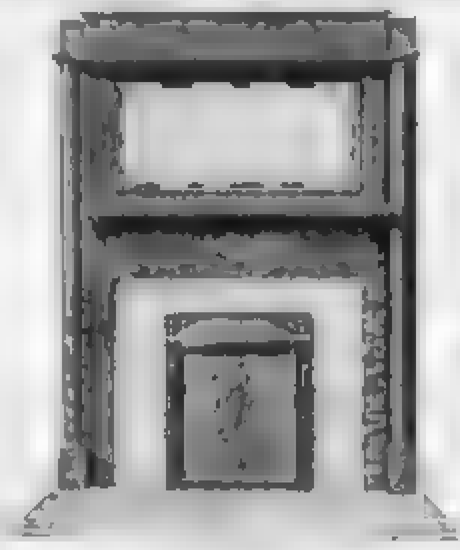

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# A Dull Fellow

(Continued from Page 9)

o'clock. But despite an unhappiness which she could not entirely explain to herself by the mocking assertion that she dreaded a necessary confession to Mrs. Grant, she came down to dinner in a becoming gown, and a beauty rather enhanced by her pallor.

Nicoll seemed neither more nor less quietly cheery than his wont throughout dinner. But he withdrew, at its conclusion, to the library, with a laughing excuse of the need to do "sentry duty" before the closet in which, as the cottage possessed no safe, the gold that Otho had brought from town was locked for the night.

Among his guests the usual summer evening followed. Half a dozen, including Otho, departed for a moonlight "trolley ride," which that season happened to be the *chic* amusement. The others lingered gayly in the shadowy veranda, whence Nicoll's bent head could be seen by one observant pair of eyes as he wrote letters beside the library table. About ten o'clock the trolley party returned, and Otho went off to bed at once, declaring that he should relieve Nicoll's watch at two. A little later Gertrude also went upstairs feeling that she had given sufficient evidence of serenity. But when her pretty hair was braided she paused before taking off her dressing gown gazing at the white bed with sudden disbelief in its suggestion of repose.

The easy chair beside the open window, through whose partial draping of honeysuckle she could see the moonlit ocean, would better suit her wakeful mood. She never knew if, perhaps, the slumber she deemed so distant had lightly wrapped her for a while, when she was roused by physical discomfort. She sat upright, and realized that her oppression was produced by an odor of ether, which eclipsed the honeysuckle, the sea saltness, and the sweetness of the summer air.

She was startled. Somebody must be ill. Yet, though she listened intently, the stillness of the house was unbroken by the commotion which sudden illness would have caused. Swiftly, silently, she descended the stairs.

She had remembered the gold in the library closet, Nicoll's solitary watch, and the talk of burglars.

Noiselessly she opened the library door, and her first glance assured her that, beside the table where a lamp burned low, Nicoll lay asleep in a big chair. The room otherwise was empty, but the closet door stood ajar, and its broken lock lay upon the floor.

Her next movement brought her to Nicoll's side. He did not wake. She touched the hand which lay on the arm of his chair—it was cold as snow, and, bending nearer, she saw his deadly whiteness, and her cheek, almost touching his lips, felt no breath upon it, though the odor of ether dazzled her.

Gathering his hand to her breast with a passion of tenderness and terror, she rose erect and faced Otho, who entered from the veranda in his stockings, carrying a partially filled pillow slip, slung weightily across his shoulders.

His ghastly stare of discovered guilt was not needed to tell her what had happened. Yet an instinct told her also, though the wrist of the man she loved lay passionless in her clasp, that Otho had meant no personal hurt to his cousin.

"He is dying from the ether you have given him," she said. "There is a moment, perhaps, to save him. Open the other windows!"

"Dying!" he echoed. "He is as strong as a bear——" With chattering teeth he gazed down at the deathlike figure before him.

"As God sees me," he muttered, "I would not have harmed him—for all his millions."

She had flung some roses from a vase, and was splashing water on Nicoll's brow and lips.

"Stand back!" she whispered. "I will care for him alone now!"

"You will not betray me?"

It was the first note of self which Otho's glance or word had shown since he had realized his cousin's danger, but, though that remembrance came to her later to condone a perversion of justice, she was moved to her reply then, only by a wondrous tenderness for the loving heart beginning to throb strongly again under her hand—and which no pain for another's shame must disturb.

"It would kill him to hear now what you have done—you are safe!" she muttered.

"But later? Have mercy! I was pushed to the wall. You suspected the picture business—it was only a question of time when my influence with him would yield to yours. I had lost the picture money at Monte Carlo—other debts are hounding me."

"Hush! He is stirring."

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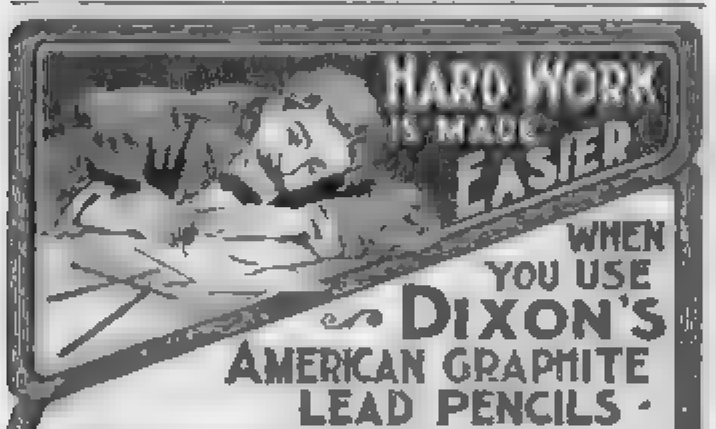
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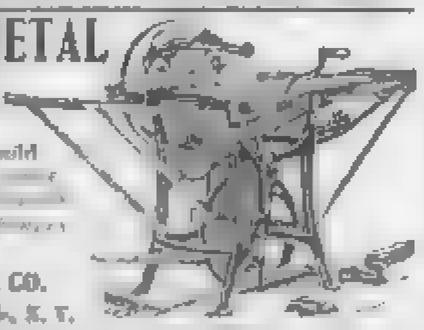

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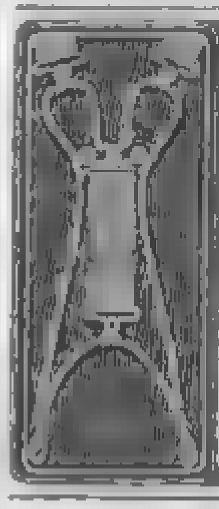

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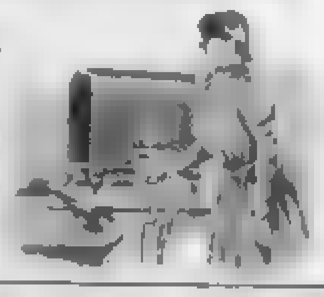

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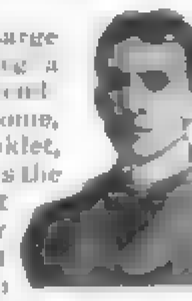

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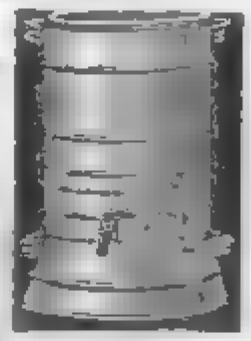

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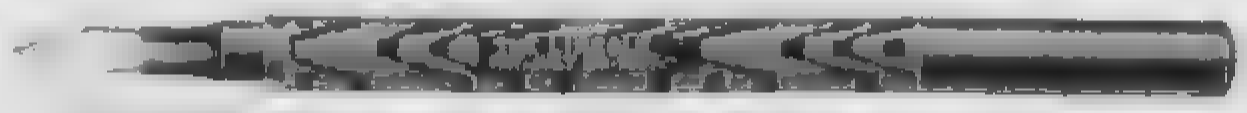

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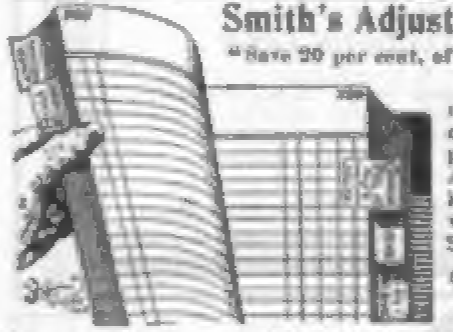

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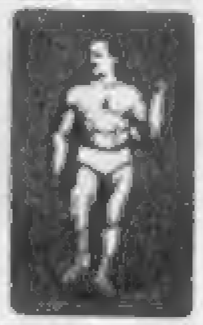

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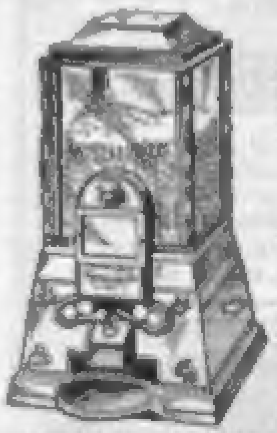

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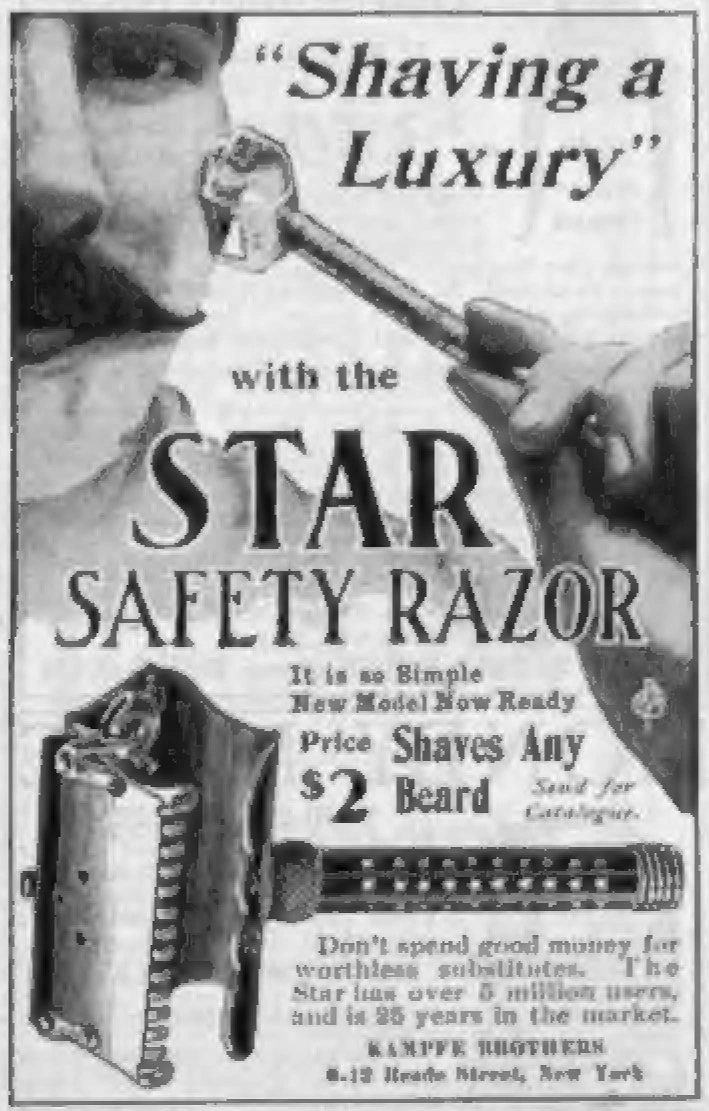
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# Superstition Trail

### By Owen Wister

*(Continued from Page 4)*

"I didn't know you felt it," said I.

"Feel it!—they've went to the railroad. Three of them are witnesses in a case at Evanston, and the Judge wants our outfit at Medicine Bow. Steve shunned me. Did he think I was going back on him?"

"What if he did? You were not. And so nobody's going to Wind River but you?"

"No. Did you notice Steve would not give us any information about Shorty? That was right. I would have acted that way, too." Thus, each time, he brought me back to the subject.

The sun was now shining warm during two or three minutes together, and gulfs of blue opened in the great white clouds. These moved and met among each other, and parted, like hands spread out, slowly weaving a spell of sleep over the day after the wakeful night storm. The huge contours of the earth lay basking and drying, and not one living creature, bird or beast, was in sight. Quiet was returning to my revived spirits, but there was none for the Virginian. And as he reasoned matters out aloud, his mood grew more overcast.

"You have a friend, and his ways are your ways. You travel together, you spree together confidentially, and you suit each other down to the ground. Then one day you find him putting his iron on another man's calf. You tell him fair and square those ways have never been your ways and ain't going to be your ways. Well, that does not change him any, for it seems he's disturbed over getting rich quick and being a big man in the Territory. And the years go on, until you are foreman of Judge Henry's ranch and he—is dangling back in them cottonwoods. What can he claim? Who made the choice? He cannot say: 'Here is my old friend that I would have stood by.' Do you think he can say that?"

"But he didn't say it," I protested.

"No. He shunned me."

"Listen," I said. "Suppose while you were on guard he had whispered, 'Get me off'—would you have done it?"

"No, sir!" said the Virginian hotly.

"Then what do you want?" I asked. "What did you want?"

He could not answer me—but I had not answered him, I saw; so I pushed it further. "Did you want indorsement from the man you were hanging? That's asking a little too much."

But he had now another confusion. "Steve stood by Shorty," he said musingly. "It was Shorty's mistake cost him his life, but all the same he didn't want us to catch——"

"You are mixing things," I interrupted. "I never heard you mix things before. And it was not Shorty's mistake."

He showed momentary interest. "Whose then?"

"The mistake of whoever took a fool into their enterprise."

"That's correct. Well, Trampas took Shorty in, and Steve would not tell on him, either."

I still tried it, saying: "They were all in the same boat." But logic was useless; he had lost his bearings in a fog of sentiment. He knew, knew passionately, that he had done right; but the silence of his old friend to him through those last hours left a sting that no reasoning could assuage. "He told good-by to the rest of the boys; but not to me." And nothing that I could point out in common-sense turned him from the thread of his own argument. He worked round the circle again to self-justification. "Was it him I was deserting? Was not the deserting done by him the day I spoke my mind about stealing calves. I have kept my ways the same. He is the one that took to new ones. The man I used to travel with is not the man back there. Same name, to be sure. And same body. But different in—and yet he had the memory! You can't never change your memory!"

He gave a sob. It was the first I had ever heard from him, and before I knew what I was doing I had reined my horse up to his and put my arm round his shoulders. I had no sooner touched him than he was utterly overcome. "I knew Steve awful well," he said.

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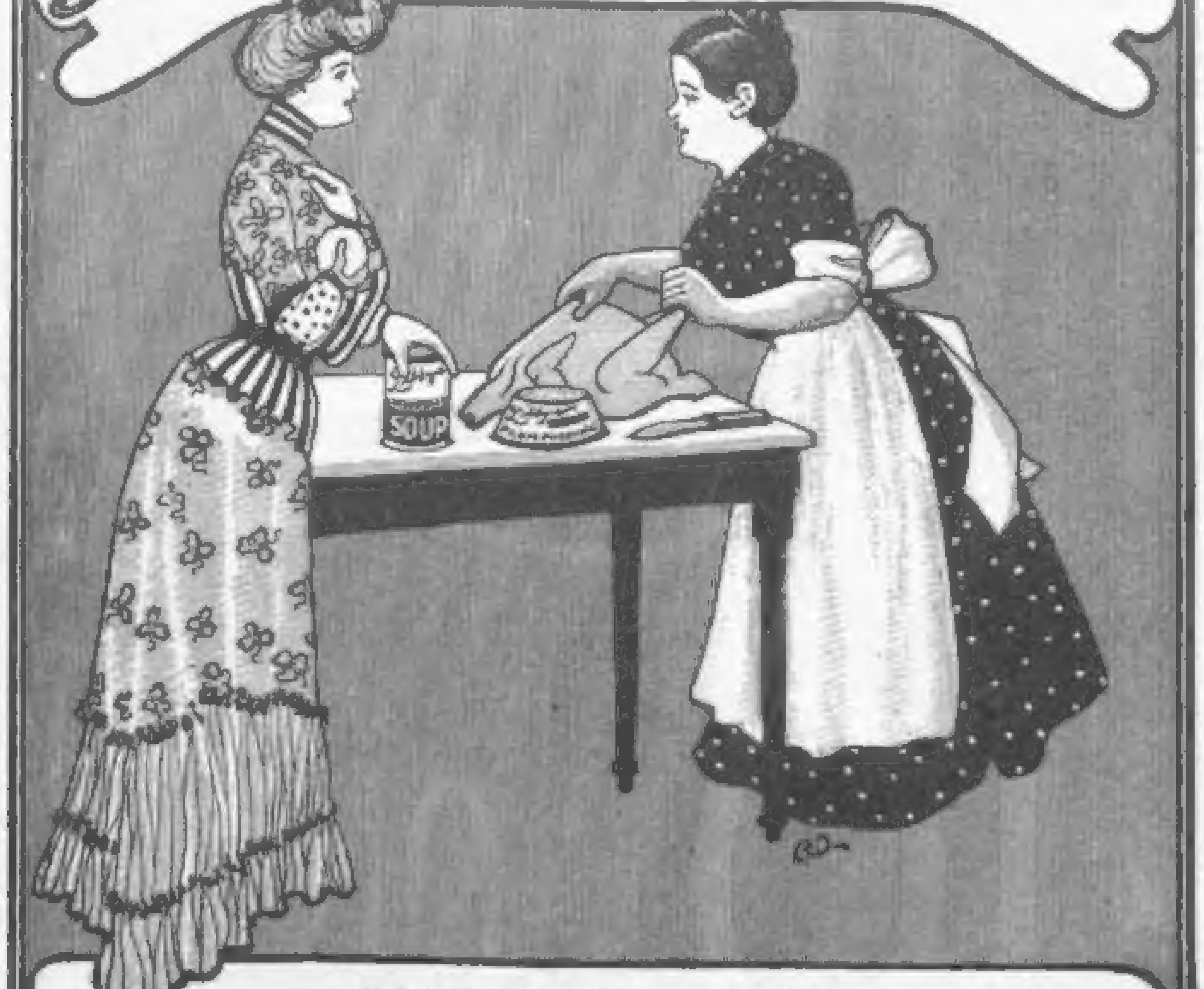

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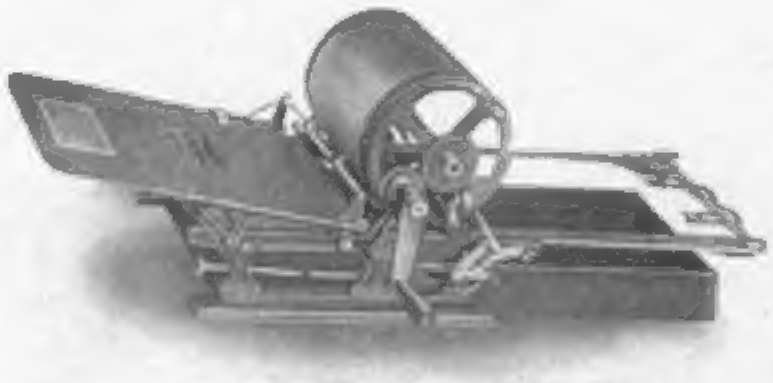

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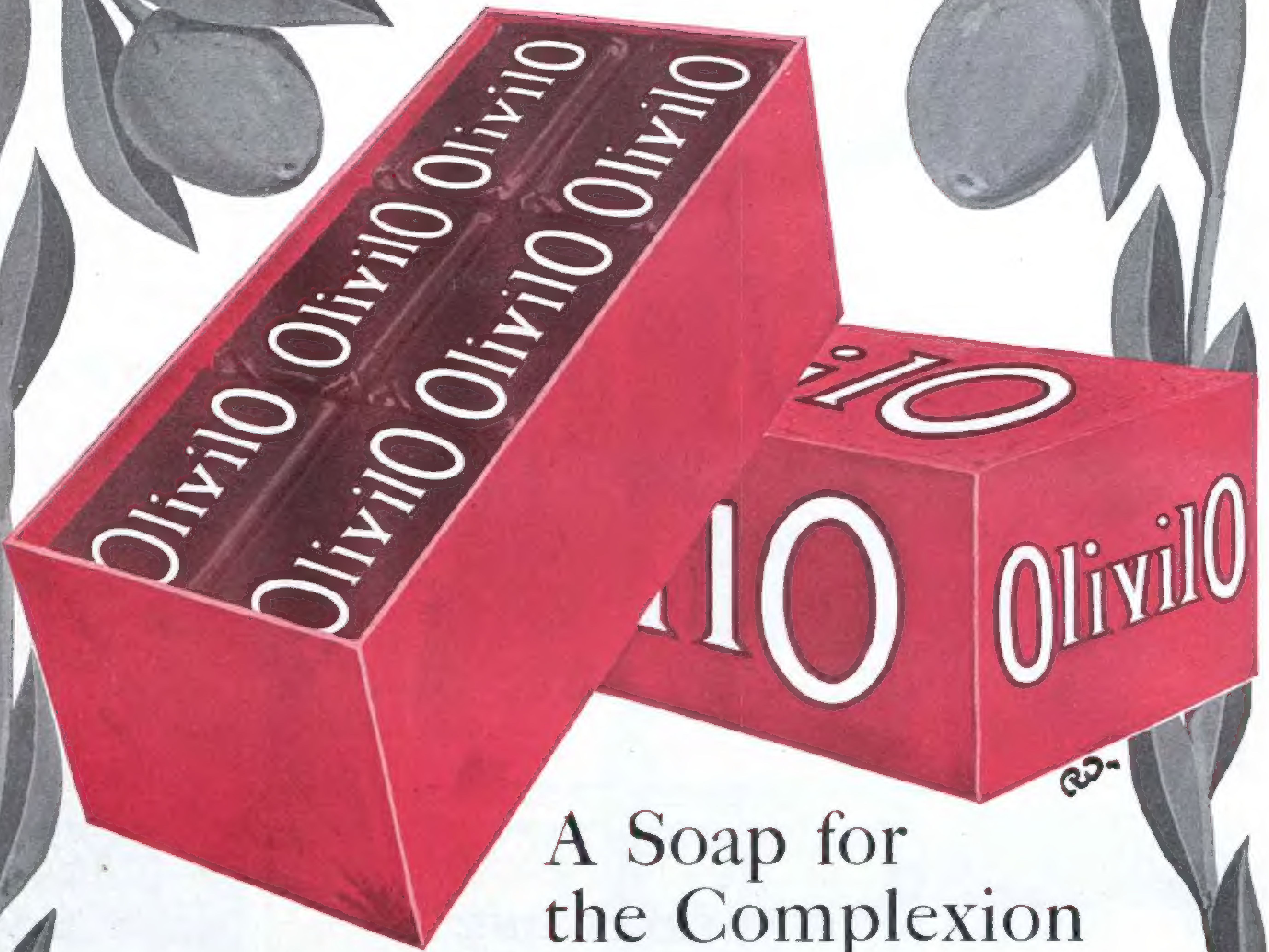
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